DOCTOR WHO

YET ANOTHER BODY AT LAST

Baker T. Ainley

The answer to the fate of Tremas of Traken comes to the Doctor as the recall circuit of his TARDIS activates, but not to recall the Doctor to Gallifrey or at the request of the Time Lords.

The Doctor realises that he will find the answers about Tremas of Traken and meet and engage with his old nemesis and mortal enemy, the Master. The rendezvous is a final climax of the Master's diabolical scheme that spanned the multiverse of space and time.

The Doctor travels to a place beyond space and time from the multiverse. A place from the time of Rassilon, now forgotten by the Time Lords of Gallifreyan society, for a final encounter—yet another body at last.

YET ANOTHER BODY AT LAST: A DOCTOR WHO FANFICTION NOVELLA

Based on the BBC television serial by Johnny Byrne by the British Broadcasting Corporation and from the novel by Terrance Dicks.

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I’ll be revenged on the whole pack of you.
Malvolio – Twelfth Night

NYSSA: The creature that killed my father...
DOCTOR: I can't choose the company I keep!
Logopolis

His sins will find their punishment in due time.
Rassilon – The Five Doctors

TREMAS: Help! Nyssa!
MASTER: So, a new body at last.
NYSSA: Father? Where are you?
Keeper of Traken

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Prologue

What Has Transpired Before

The Doctor and his young companion, Adric, were requested by the Keeper of the Traken Union to visit Traken and stop an unknown evil that threatened it.

Ultimately, the Doctor, with the help of Consul Tremas and his daughter Nyssa, defeated the enemy disguised as Melkur, who had stolen the Keepership—the Doctor's constant rival and archenemy: the Master.

The Master sought a thirteenth regeneration, and after his failure on Gallifrey to use the Eye of Harmony and the Sash of Rassilon to regenerate his decayed and rotting body, the Master travelled to Traken, his TARDIS disguised as the grotesque statue the Trakenites called Melkur.

By manipulating Tremas's wife, Kassia, the Master used her to become Keeper, and then destroyed and killed her, thus completing his scheme for another thirteenth regeneration.

Yet with the Doctor's help and Tremas's assistance, both Adric and Nyssa overloaded the Source that the Master, as Keeper, controlled, causing a massive backwash of power. This backwash destroyed the Melkur statue, the Master's TARDIS, and the Doctor presumed the Master, whose decayed form had been the conduit for the Source's backwash.

However, the Master had stored another TARDIS away, and once he wrenched himself away from the Melkur TARDIS console, he escaped.

Later, after the Doctor and Adric thanked Tremas, said their goodbyes, and departed Traken, Luvic was inaugurated as the new Keeper.

Unfortunately, Tremas was trapped, first by his curiosity about the longcase clock he found in the Consular chamber. Then Tremas became trapped and paralysed when he touched the Master's TARDIS; a fly in the Master's web, the Master, the spider, used some remaining powers as Keeper to slide into, merge, and take over Tremas's body for his thirteenth regeneration, gaining a new, younger body at last.

When the Master attempted to learn the secret of Logopolis, his meddling disrupted a Charged Vacuum Emboitement, which released an entropy wave that destroyed Traken and much of the known universe. Nyssa had learned from the Doctor that the man who looked younger and colder was not her father, Tremas. It was the Master in Tremas's body, using his form.

When confronted, the Master merely said his body remained useful. Inwardly, Nyssa blamed the Doctor for Tremas's fate. Her father, Tremas, had tried to help him, but in doing so, had lost his life, and the Master had taken his body. Nyssa could not mourn her father, Tremas, and by Trakenite belief, she knew he would not be at peace while the Master used his body for his evil schemes.

Nyssa had escaped the destruction of Traken and had joined the Doctor as a travelling companion with his many adventures throughout the universe in time and space.

Eventually, Nyssa decided to remain on the Terminus space station to help the Lazars infected with a horrific disease, and to free the Vanir from the Terminus corporation by synthesising the hydromel they needed to live. The Terminus space station would become a proper hospital, not a dumping ground for the Lazars kept in check by the Vanir.

The Doctor had encountered the Master, still in the body of Tremas, using Tremas's form, in many different plots and schemes. The Master used Tremas's body in his quest to become the "Master of all matter in the universe."

In these failed schemes, the Master was defeated, sometimes suffering in his "new" body. He had been burned, knocked out, punched, restrained, shrunk, and trapped under his own TARDIS in his fiendish actions and schemes.

Yet the Doctor always had a doubt, pondering the ultimate fate of Tremas of Traken. Undoubtedly, Nyssa, while on Terminus, was also contemplating the same thing—her father, Tremas’s fate beyond becoming the new vessel of the Master as a new body.

Nyssa had not accepted her father's fate, which gave her hope, albeit from a blind, willful ignorance of the obvious fact that the Master had killed her stepmother, Kassia, and then had destroyed Traken after stealing her father's body.

The Doctor, however, knew his nemesis and the Master's mind; this gave him doubts that Nyssa would never know, and he would not share during their travels in time and space.

Nyssa thought her father, Tremas, was gone, and the Master had destroyed him when he overwrote Tremas's mind in sliding into his body. The Doctor did have doubts, questions, and scepticism; knowing that destiny and fate would resolve those doubts and answer those questions, he kept them to himself. Yet now...

Chapter 1 Journey

The Doctor stood motionless in the modern control room of his TARDIS, at the console, leaning forward, slouching forward slightly. The bright white interior, with flashing lights, and the purple-pink console column undulating, made the control room one of energy, life, and activity. Yet the Doctor stood inert, contemplating things. Finally, the Doctor moved and then began to walk around the control room.

The fourth Doctor paced back and forth in the control room of his TARDIS. The console column went up and down, rhythmically, almost hypnotically...the heartbeat of his old type forty time capsule. The silent ululation as the TARDIS travelled through time and space to some point.

The Doctor ceased his pacing and put his hands in his pockets, pondering. Soon, the Doctor watched the rising and falling of the column, which indicated the TARDIS was travelling in the space-time vortex...only it was to some destination unknown. At least unknown for the coordinates, both spatial and temporal.

The Doctor's brown felt hat sat upon the column, rising and falling with the console column, and his greatcoat and scarf he wore, more out of habit than any other reason. His coat, scarf, and felt hat were his trademark, his signature for this fourth regeneration as a tall man with dark brown curly hair. Wearing them gave him a sense of stability in himself.

Currently, the Doctor was between travelling companions, and even K-9 Mark II was gone.

The Doctor had considered another K-9, another electronic dog companion and pet. But now the Doctor was between dogs, and another would not be helpful. At least not for now, the Doctor thought.

The Doctor knew he was travelling, and knew where. Although for a Time Lord, a Gallifreyan that had mastered the laws of time and space, where meant not just a place, but at a time, a specific set of temporal coordinates in space-time.

The Doctor looked at the console, and all the instruments were reading normally, or what was normal for the TARDIS. Everything was "operating in design parameters" as K-9 would have stated in his mechanical, deadpan voice that was more factual than artificial.

The one instrument was the recall circuit indicator of the space-time element. The Doctor had Damon on Gallifrey replace the space-time element of the time rotor, explicitly without a recall circuit, after the Doctor was recalled to Gallifrey by the High Council of Time Lords. That was when Omega attempted to return to the normal universe and seek his revenge.

Yet the Doctor had defeated Omega, the first and greatest Time Lord who had become trapped in the anti-matter universe when he had given the people of Gallifrey time travel. Thus allowing them to become the Time Lords.

Only now, the recall circuit of the space-time element was working, and the Doctor had not expected the recall circuit to start working again, but the fact did not completely surprise him.

The recall circuit, or the space-time element, was taking him and his TARDIS to a place in the space-time continuum that one could not reach by a specific set of space-time coordinates.

The Doctor frowned, his lips tight. The recall circuit was not one the High Council of Time Lords used. This recall circuit in the time rotor was something of Rassilon, something even the Time Lords did not know.

This was more like being a madman in a labyrinth; only someone completely mad could escape from the maze. Only, in this case, it was finding one way through the labyrinth, the maze of space-time, to a specific destination through the recall circuit.

The Doctor walked around the console, more out of habit than any other reason. All the controls, indicators, and instrumentation were functioning properly, and the TARDIS was operating optimally. That did not surprise the Doctor either; one did not go to the destination he knew of, but was still waiting to see if indeed his expectations were correct.

The Doctor stopped and saw the raised triangular indicator in the TARDIS console where the recall circuit indicator was located. The Doctor pondered, for Damon on Gallifrey had installed a new space-time element, one without a recall circuit that the High Council of Time Lords could activate. The Doctor was free, off his leash to the Time Lords.

But the space-time circuit was a design, a technology of Rassilon attached to the time rotor of the TARDIS. So the recall circuit was not taking the Doctor back to Gallifrey at the behest of the High

Council of Time Lords, but by some other enigmatic entity. The Doctor was summoned, like a courtier to the court of the nobility. The Doctor had some ideas of whom, but did not dwell on them. The recall was elsewhere, but somewhere the TARDIS had gone before. But where?

The Doctor leaned forward, staring at the spot on the TARDIS console, as he was considering and pondering.

A Terran legend, from the planet Terra, one of, or if not, his favourite planet—they called it Earth. The Doctor had developed a fondness for Earth, or Terra, even though he had been exiled by the High Council of the Time Lords of Gallifrey, the Supreme Council, and had been banished to the backward planet infested with homo sapiens, Terra, or Earth. The Doctor shook his head, shaking off the memories and recalling the Terran legend.

Terrans were an imaginative species, creative and yet in some ways primitive; it was that mix that fascinated the Doctor. They had fragments of greater truths about the universe, their true nature, and the Earth's history, as the legends and myths.

The Doctor stood erect and thought, taking in the console room. The Earth legend was from the era of the buccaneers, pirates, and privateers, the derring-do swashbuckling adventurers, in Earth's timeframe of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, after the discovery of the Americas. The Doctor smiled, the danger and derring-do, the quest for treasure from the New World of the Americas.

The legend of the "Isla de Mureta," an island that could not be found unless you had already been there, and knew where. The location was an island of death. That island was marked on no map or chart, and was a revered place by pirates, privateers, and buccaneers. Yet it was only a legend, a "sailor's yarn" of human imagination, of that bloody mercantile era in the history of Earth.

The Doctor thought with a slight sigh of realisation that was where he was heading...to the space and temporal coordinates of an "Isla de Mureta"...and even more a rumour on Gallifrey, but the Time Lords had long since forgotten much of their past, their history beyond Rassilon.

In his own time, Rassilon was known mostly as an engineer of great achievement, but had become the founder of the Society of Time Lords, the modern-day Gallifreyan civilisation.

Some of the fragments of the past were known, such as the Death Zone on Gallifrey, and the relics from the "Old Time" but many aspects of Rassilon's achievements were lost...perhaps the "wisdom of Rassilon" as Borusa had called it...only telling the Doctor he had, as an incoming President of the Supreme Council of Gallifrey, had found the Great Key, the first since Rassilon. The Doctor still had no memory of those events, but he had a vague intuition, more a feeling than a thought.

The Doctor shook off his nostalgic reflections and focused on the moment. The recall circuit had activated, and the Doctor found it had "locked" the navigation controls of the TARDIS. The Doctor and his TARDIS were being guided, taken, and driven to an

unreachable point in the space-time continuum. The Doctor had become a passenger, like his previous companions, in his own TARDIS.

Like the legendary Isla de Mureta, the Doctor was going to a place that was unreachable and impossible to navigate towards. Yet the recall circuit was not navigating, it was...well, taking him by a deliberate jump...a pull, to a place of vague rumour in the history of Gallifrey. Yet only reachable if you have been there, and by location, know where it was, and it was beyond the known universe.

The Doctor thought of the Terran detective, Duggan, a human, who was more brawn than brain. This was when the Doctor was on Terra, in the city of Paris, with Romana on a vacation to show her the sights.

The Doctor and Romana had found Scaroth, the last of the Jagaroth race, had been attempting to change the events in human history—and erase the beginning. The erasure of the birth of life on Terra, and the ultimate birth of humans, homo sapiens, on Terra. But just before leaving, the Doctor had explained to Duggan in a cryptic, but evasive riddle.

The Doctor had once explained that where he was from depended on where you are going, and you work backwards. But the Doctor had, in an ironic foreshadowing of this moment, said he did not know where he was going, with the recall circuit now operating; that was true.

Only the Doctor knew where he was going and could work backwards. Ultimately, not to Gallifrey, the society of Time Lords, and even Rassilon.

For Duggan, it was meant to be evasive and cryptic, and ultimately, Duggan would probably not believe his adventure with the Doctor and Romana.

The Doctor circled the console again and thought, the morbid thought of the feeling and perception he had...that where he was going would be another unbelievable adventure.

While the location was unreachable, except by a random fluke of navigation, and only by someone who had been there before, there was a purpose and intention in the journey.

At least, the Doctor thought, while there was no technological indication of his destination or the purpose of his journey. The Doctor knew from some inner sight, perception, and knowledge. Soon he cogitated quietly, I will know, the Doctor thought, he would know.

The Doctor glanced at his brown felt hat on the column, and to his surprise and shock, the column had stopped moving.

The Doctor had arrived, and the TARDIS had materialised out of the space-time vortex at his destination. The Doctor felt the frisson of emotion, one of fear and uncertainty, but then the Doctor pushed that emotion down, slamming down with another feeling—determination.

The Doctor looked at the TARDIS console and saw that the navigation controls and the coordinate selector were unlocked. The Doctor considered. He could leave now. Only his curiosity kept the Doctor here now. The coordinates kept changing, as the Doctor watched, like a combination safe trying to find its own combination. The Doctor sighed deeply; the TARDIS was attempting to find the coordinates of the location in the universe, but was unable.

Pragmatic and practical, the Doctor pushed the button controlling the view screen and glanced at his destination...the unknown, enigmatic, now certain...and just beyond, outside the TARDIS, waiting for the Doctor, his rendezvous with destiny.

Chapter 2 Arrival

The Doctor was sensible and pragmatic. He knew where the TARDIS had materialised from travelling in the time vortex. The Doctor reached the TARDIS console, found the control, and pressed the button.

The viewport opened with a whir as the two shutter doors slid open with a mechanical hum of operation, and the Doctor looked at his destination.

At first, the Doctor perceived a large structure, almost a temple or cathedral, or the interior of one. But then his eyes were drawn to a hexagonal-style opening, like a window or portal, and the streaming colours and lights beyond.

The Doctor reached for the control on the console to close the view screen, but as he stared into the swirl of light and colour, his hand fell still and stopped in mid-reach for the control, and the view screen switched to idle.

"The quantum time stream..." the Doctor said softly, to no one except himself. The Doctor stared into the quantum stream, his eyes entranced by the colours and lights, and then his mind filled with thoughts, ideas, knowledge, and perceptions beyond the space-time vortex and his lifetime of travels and experiences. The Doctor stood motionless as if time had stopped for him, even in the TARDIS control room, in a state of temporal grace.

The Doctor suddenly found himself blinking, and his hand closed the view screen. The hexagonal window continued the enthralling

swirl of light and colour, although the Doctor frowned. The hexagonal portal was now different, and the Doctor realised his mind had filled with the perception and knowledge of the quantum stream.

The Doctor turned, taking in the TARDIS control room, and sighed audibly. He knew where he was and that his TARDIS had taken him to this place. The Doctor only had an inkling as to why.

"The quantum null," the Doctor said. "The nexus of the confluence of all space-time continuums, a null point of inflexion across the multiverse. Rassilon's lost discovery and magnum opus of engineering..."

The Doctor shook his head; hearing himself think aloud was unsettling for some reason. There was no companion, no assistant, no K-9 robotic dog, just himself. The disturbing nature of the Null made the Doctor feel alone, and speaking aloud helped him shake off that sensation.

The Doctor left his hat and scarf but put on his greatcoat, adjusting it around his tall frame. His greatcoat was a cross between a coat, a jacket, and a long coat, like a flowing cape. The Doctor fretted and fumbled with his greatcoat. The Doctor was checking the various pockets for the odds and ends he carried about.

The Doctor looked at the closed view screen and then pursed his lips, knowing he had to step out of the safety of his TARDIS and the safety of the state of temporal grace into the Null. The Doctor

patted his greatcoat until he found the right pocket with the right item.

A small bag of jelly babies in a white paper bag, the Doctor's trademark, and often a gift to others for various reasons. The Doctor shook the bag and found the one he sought. The jelly baby was orange, a small hunk of soft candy in sugar with a colour indicating a flavour.

The Doctor ate the jelly baby and waited for some moments of interminable time, then found another he wanted by shaking the paper bag; the only one of its kind—a blue jelly baby. The Doctor swallowed the blue jelly baby and, for a brief moment, felt queasy and disoriented.

The Doctor steadied himself against the TARDIS console and then stood erect, giving his head a slight shake. He gave a slight cough, felt his steadiness was firm, and then reached for the lever on the TARDIS console. Throwing the lever, causing a whirring sound, the two TARDIS doors swung open inward. The Doctor patted the console of his TARDIS, more to reassure himself, and stepped through the doors.

Stepping out of the TARDIS, the Doctor noticed the dry, sterile air, almost like a rarefied freezer with a scrubbed, clean, somewhat sterile atmosphere. The two blue doors of the TARDIS clicked, and the doors shut and secured, locked to anyone outside without the TARDIS key.

The Doctor felt the TARDIS key in the pocket of his greatcoat, squeezing it as he stepped out of the shadow of the TARDIS into

the Null. He felt a faint sense of dread and apprehension as he breathed the sterile, clean air that had been unbreathed, inhaled, and smelled in countless millennia... time of a long duration, even for a Time Lord.

"No time like the present," the Doctor said with antic humour and conclusion.

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The Null was vast; the ceiling, if it had one, was lost in the dark shadows and darkness overhead. The Doctor marvelled at the architecture, elegant, simple, yet brilliant—a lasting and fitting tribute to Rassilon, the creator of the Null.

The Null resembled a large temple, an inner cathedral, but it was an oblong rectangle. The hexagonal gateway at both ends appeared nearly like a reflection.

But it was the quantum stream at a fixed inflexion point across the uncountably infinite many universes, quantum realities, of the multiverse. The Null was a common point across the multiverses.

Large, thick columns of black marble rose from the grey marble-like stone floor, which was highly polished and glistened in the faint light from the quantum stream, into the shadows and darkness. The light was faint in the Null, but the space was not dark. The columns were eight, arranged along a central aisle from one hexagonal portal to the other.

There were plain rectangular blocks arranged in an orderly line that were light greyish-white. It was a basic type of bench. The

benches were arranged in rows of eight, placed between each pillar.

The Null's architectural style was a mock temple or cathedral where the Time Lords could come to pay heed to Rassilon's now lost great achievement and have the services of the quantum stream. It was no wonder that Rassilon had constructed the mock, simulated temple or cathedral for the Null.

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The Doctor frowned slightly, thinking that much like the world of Gallifrey and the civilisation of the Time Lords, the Null was another great thing of Rassilon lost to their history, and now only a legend, myth, and rumour.

The Doctor wondered if Rassilon had known much of what he had achieved, as the first Time Lord would be lost to his species, the Time Lords. Perhaps Rassilon did, the Doctor thought inwardly, he was a wily, cunning "old bird" as the Doctor called him.

Borusa had once referred to "the wisdom of Rassilon", and over the Doctor's journeys and adventures, the Doctor had come to see that.

Perhaps Rassilon had created and then allowed to be lost, the knowledge of the Null. But the knowledge was not lost, but misplaced like a book hidden in plain sight on the wrong bookshelf in a library.

Rassilon still existed, lived on, his thought patterns in the APC net. The matrix was the Amplified Panatropic Computations, trillions of

electrochemical cells in a continuous matrix. And the Doctor had been connected to the APC net, so his mind had touched that of Rassilon. Thus, the knowledge of the Null still existed, lost to the old records, but still in the mind and experience of Rassilon's thoughts.

The Doctor returned to the present, but he sensed something was amiss. Yet to his annoyance, the Doctor could not put his finger on what it was that could not be spoken, on the tip of his tongue. The humans from the Doctor's favourite planet, Terra, or Earth as they called it, had such quaint phrases. The Doctor, his eyes adjusting to the faint light, still could not fathom what was...wrong.

The Doctor strode along the central aisle, shiny and smooth as glass, for there was no passage of time in the Null. At the confluence point, the inflexion of the different quantum realities, time stood still, or time was completely open in the infinitely infinite universes. But the Null, as a structure, or a mock building, there was no passage of time, nor any reckoning of time.

All things in the Null were in the infinitesimal moment between the quantum flux in the states of a photon or graviton. For a homo sapien, Time Lord, Trakenite, Dalek, Sontaran, or any humanoid or life form, time effectively stood still, hence no dust, detritus, lint, or any of the relics from entropy.

The Null was due much time, as it stood at the crossroads of all points of time across all quantum realities. A single femtosecond, as humans on Terra measured time at the most minimal, to

billions of years beyond the heat death of the prime universe, from which the Doctor originated, were all the same.

Space, as well as the Null, touched, connecting all points of space in the multiverse at all points of time, with the Null as the inflexion point across both space and time. The Doctor wondered how Rassilon had known of such a place to construct the Null as a physical location, outside of time, space, and the prime universe. Thus, unknown to any Time Lord—unless that Time Lord or others had once been there.

Rassilon had created his unique paradox with the Null, much like the paradoxes as riddles of the Greek homo sapien, Zeno. The only way to find the Null was to have been at the Null before. Much like the fabled and mythical Isle of the Dead in pirate lore. Yet here the Doctor was, standing in the central aisle along the path between the two points to see into the quantum stream.

The Doctor walked down the aisle, pondering still. Rassilon had created an observatory where the observer would not become the observed, as the humans of Earth had speculated about travelling outside time. The irony was that the Null was an observatory, a multiversal observatory of the uncountably infinite realities that existed in the multiverse.

The Doctor, while slow, reached the end of the great aisle, and again the view through the portal of the quantum stream was just a shower of light and colour, unlike before when the Doctor had gazed into the quantum stream. The Doctor knew all he needed to know by staring into the quantum stream, and while the portal

seemed open, the Doctor knew some force field, a "bubble," protected the Null as a structure.

The Doctor turned on his left heel and started to pace back in the opposite direction towards his TARDIS. Even a fixed point across the multiversal space-time was still a point in space. The Doctor stopped.

"A point in space," the Doctor said aloud, softly, but his voice echoed slightly in the Null. The sudden realisation struck him in his mind, and the Doctor knew what was amiss...and began to walk with a steady stride. The Doctor stopped at his TARDIS, taking some comfort and reassurance. Standing next to his old type forty blue police box, which was his time capsule, his TARDIS, the Doctor felt safe.

The Doctor looked intently about but then sensed a presence, now that he was focused on his surroundings.

"Welcome, Doctor," said a silken yet deep male voice that the Doctor knew instantly.

"I have been expecting you for some time. Welcome."

The Doctor turned about and found the source of that voice. The figure stepped from the shadows, from behind one of the pillars.

The figure that emerged from the shadows was his old enemy, his long nemesis...the Master.

Chapter 3 Nemesis

The Doctor looked at the Master, who stood in a regal pose, his arms slightly folded behind his back.

What was amiss now made sense. The Master had hidden his own TARDIS as a Greek pillar. The Master's TARDIS had then blended in with the tall columns and the pillars that were the Null's architectural style.

The Doctor had sensed the erroneous pillar, a false column in the grand hall of the Null, but had not realised it...until now.

"For some time?" the Doctor rephrased the Master's statement as a question.

The Master smirked, sensing a verbal game of brinksmanship, as he and the Doctor exchanged barbs like two duelling knights, their blades crossed in battle.

"Time enough to wait," the Master answered.

"Ultimately, I knew you would make your way here, and I have been waiting. Some time for you, but here there is no time."

"The infinite, forever now," the Doctor responded in a quick, trite summary.

"Precisely, Doctor," the Master said, "although you have not asked..."

"Why?" the Doctor asked, then added quickly, "I already know."

"Do you now, Doctor?" the Master half-asked, chuckling slightly.

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The Doctor examined the Master. He seemed young—well, young after stealing the body of Tremas, the Trakenite scientist.

The Master had his black hair in a ponytail and wore a black suit with silvery oak leaves on the collar and long tail sleeves. The black gloves the Master wore complemented his black suit. The Master now looked like an intergalactic butler, the Doctor thought.

Although in the wake of murder, destruction, chaos, and death, the butler had done it. The Master sensed the Doctor's long gaze and, looking into the Doctor's eyes, could see it.

The Doctor was sizing him up, preparing to battle his greatest foe again.

"Admiring my new body, Doctor?" the Master asked in an abrupt change of topic.

"Admire?" the Doctor said with a slight hint of disdain. "Admire what?"

The Master and the Doctor kept a distance but moved around slightly, as if friends chatting, instead of sworn, bitter enemies.

"My new body, Doctor, and the first and only Time Lord to have a thirteenth regeneration."

"Yes, by murdering an innocent man, then stealing his body, using it for your evil schemes and plots."

"Your sentiment is showing, Doctor, and your sentimentality is your weakness..."

"Sentimental? I express sentiment as I am disgusted by your murdering an innocent man and then stealing his body?"

"Murder, Doctor? The body is alive, and...I was Keeper of Traken, so when betrayed, that Trakenite bastard would have been executed. I did not want his body, the husk of him, to be wasted."

"You're too kind, too noble. But you murdered, destroyed Tremas, and then used his form to continue your quest for power..."

"Not power, Doctor, but to be Master of all matter in the universe. But your argument is a cloud of sentiment, and it is my body, Doctor."

"Yours?" the Doctor asked rhetorically.

"Mine, Doctor. When I took this body of the Trakenite for my thirteenth regeneration, it became mine, every part. From the last hair of his beard, the hair between his buttocks around his anus, to the follicles on his head, to the tip of his penis, the skin of his scrotum, to his toenails...mine!"

"It must be gratifying that you could murder Tremas, then take his body, steal it, and then be proud of that fact."

"You're a sentimental fool, Doctor, and the Trakenite does not exist, and the dead have no names. And innocent, that Trakenite was..."

The Master fell silent, cautious about continuing.

"Was...?" the Doctor asked.

"He was a homosexual, Doctor. I'm surprised you did not realise this."

"His daughter is his best friend; he remarried that power-hungry bitch of a wife, Kassia. She often referred to him as 'Tremas, or as my husband...' his function not of affection or love."

"Or Luvic, avoiding and staying with that old hag, that crone Katura...hiding from the Trakenite homosexual. Luvic had no greatness; he was only on the council as he traded sexual favours with Tremas to get there."

The Doctor pondered this. The Master might be speaking the truth, but the Master's truth is too twisted and used for his own gain and purpose.

"Even if Tremas was a homosexual or gay man," the Doctor said, using a popular Terran term, "you still killed a person, a living, sentient being."

The Master snorted and shook his head.

"The Trakenite's body will be better used than it would have been. How did you put it about the Traken Union, an empire of 'people being terribly nice to each other'...the Trakenite was a sheep, an old, long-haired, bearded homosexual in a nothing empire, in an old, out-of-shape body. His body was wasted and was ultimately fated to be my new vessel, my new body."

"A Trakenite body," the Doctor replied. "Trakenites are a variation of human beings, homo sapiens, and you stole the body of one for your next life...regeneration."

"And your point regarding this obvious truth, Doctor?" the Master asked.

"Whatever you want to call your new body—Trakenite, human—it is non-Gallifreyan."

"So, Doctor?"

The Doctor smiled, knowing he was right, as the Master did not admit the obvious facts, a truth about the Null.

"Are you forgetting Rassilon's fail-safe? You've been waiting, as you cannot leave."

"At last, Doctor," the Master said, "we come to the heart of the matter, don't we?"

"Well, all in time..." the Doctor said in subtle humour, sensing and hearing the change in the Master's voice.

"The Trakenite bastard's daughter, that bitch Nyssa, well, I did offer her what was left of her homosexual father. I also told her she was lucky; she might have wound up with a semen stain inside the Trakenite's gown, or loincloth...or on Luvic's beard or gown, or a few drops of semen in his mouth."

#

The Doctor looked at the Master, who seemed pleased with the revelation, but the Doctor said nothing, anticipating more to come from the Master.

"And I offered her what was left of her homosexual father..." the Master added, tapping his gloves together in contemplation.

"What was that?" the Doctor asked, mostly to keep the Master from revealing his story, however vile and repulsive it was to hear.

"Oh, her father's gown, or that long flowing robe, his loincloth, shoes, and ring... all the Trakenite had on his body that I took."

"Stole, you mean," said the Doctor, "when you stole Tremas's body..."

"I'm sure the High Council of Time Lords will give me one hundred Terran years for stealing his clothing..." the Master said sardonically with mocking humour.

"Perhaps another hundred more for the body and its contents at the time I slid into the Trakenite's form."

The Master merely smiled in amusement but continued his tale.

"And I offered to give her the contents of her father's body, the waste, urine, and faeces inside him when I took it during my thirteenth regeneration..."

The Doctor felt a bit disgusted; the Master had indeed taken everything: Tremas's body, his clothes, his ring, and also the waste inside his bowels and bladder, the contents of his stomach.

The Master had taken everything from Tremas and kept...all of it. Tremas's clothes, the food in his stomach, faeces in his bowels, and urine in his bladder.

"I'm sure Nyssa was thoroughly disgusted," the Doctor said. "And refused..."

"I did offer to empty my bodily waste that was the Trakenite's into a silver chalice and give it all to her; she could create an altar to her homosexual father and put the chalice of his excrement and urine with the gown, loincloth, and shoes..."

"And his consular ring," the Doctor finished.

"She refused, with some colourful comments... so I've kept the contents of the Trakenite as my trophy and remembrance of my thirteenth regeneration..."

"I am surprised," the Doctor said; the Master was so proud of stealing Tremas's body, the clothing, the ring, and the contents inside his stomach, bowels, and bladder... and then keeping them.

"After the misery in my decayed form, Doctor," said the Master, "there is a certain pleasure in being in a living body that can feel and is full..."

"I'm sure," the Doctor said. "A memorial to your destruction of Tremas, leaving only his clothes and bodily waste behind..."

The Master snorted. The Doctor had a sentimental morality he found amusing but insufferable. The Master walked slowly away, indifferent and unmoved by the Doctor's comment.

The Master turned, his hands in front of him, and when he faced the Doctor, he rubbed his hands together, the black gloves making a soft scrabbling sound.

The Master stared at the Doctor, who waited.

#

"I have not forgotten Rassilon's fail-safe," the Master said, putting his hands on his hips as if it were important.

"Rassilon was a cunning, wily old bird," the Doctor replied. "Only a mind of time shall remember..."

"I know the quote from the books of olden times, Doctor," said the Master. "But I am a Time Lord, so I possess a mind of time."

"Yes, in a human body, or a variant of one—the one you stole from Tremas," said the Doctor. "Your new life, thirteenth regeneration, has cost you some benefits of being a Gallifreyan."

"No, really, Doctor, I can leave the Null and know all the possibilities across the multiverse of space-time."

"Perhaps," said the Doctor, circling, his boots scuffing slightly as he did.

"But Rassilon's fail-safe is to protect against anyone other than a Time Lord from coming here, seeing all their possible fates, and leaving with that knowledge.

You can leave the Null, but in a Trakenite body, you will lose all knowledge, much like I did when the Sontarans tried to invade Gallifrey and time."

"That is why I have been waiting," the Master said. "I can leave the Null as I am, but I require your help and assistance to escape with the knowledge."

"Never. I will not help you escape with the ultimate knowledge of possibilities," the Doctor said emphatically.

"You will help me, Doctor," said the Master, "because it is in your best interests."

#

The Doctor was about to respond with another refusal, but the Master stepped back, now holding his ultimate weapon, the Tissue Compression Eliminator, held in a black-gloved hand.

"Not the matter condensation," the Doctor said. "You kill me, and you cannot escape."

"As I said, Doctor," the Master stated, TCE aimed at the Doctor, "you will help me. If I cannot escape the Null, then you will never escape it either."

"So not escaping means being trapped here forever in Tremas's body..."

"The Trakenite is unimportant, nor is his form. For only my escape matters, now. With the knowledge of defeats and other

possibilities, I will then be victorious...I shall truly be Master of the universe, Doctor."

The Doctor smiled and shook his head. Whatever scheme the Master had, it returned to his desire to be "master of all matter" in the universe. Knowing how things were different in alternate universes and quantum realities, he could do that.

Still, the Doctor paused at that point in reflection.

"Even if you do escape the Null with all the knowledge still in your memory," said the Doctor, "the High Council of Time Lords will not let you contravene the first law of time."

The Master snorted with contempt and gestured for the Doctor to start walking down the long aisle. As the Doctor did so, the Master explained as they walked.

"Contravening the First Law of Time," the Master explained, "I will simply arrange things so that I, in those moments in time, know what to expect and, knowing myself, how to plan around them and anticipate them."

"Possibly," the Doctor said, "so where are we going?"

"Your TARDIS," the Master replied. "And the Time Lords are an impotent lot; they do not interfere, even when they could or should."

The Doctor did not respond, standing in the shadow of his TARDIS. Looking at the Master, gesturing with the TCE to enter, the Doctor searched his pockets.

"Quickly, Doctor," the Master said with a tone of impatience. "I will explain my plan once we are ensconced in your TARDIS, where you shall help me."

The Doctor was going to reply, but found his TARDIS key, inserted it, and turned the lock. The police box door opened with a faint click of the lock, and then a squeak. After removing the key, he strode in, putting the key back into his pocket. The Master followed, his TCE at the ready for any treachery.

The Doctor smiled slightly, but the Master, behind the Doctor, did not see it. If the Master had, he might have been cautious of the Doctor.

The Doctor knew the Master was confident and a bit overconfident now, so he was less on guard, and that was what the Doctor wanted...the Master vulnerable in his hubris.

Chapter 4 Schemes

The Doctor, as he entered the control room of his TARDIS, raised his hands in a mock show of submissiveness. Turning, the Doctor saw the Master facing him, his TCE still pointed menacingly at him. The Master stood out, his swarthy dark features, hair, and dark suit in stark contrast to the bright white style of the Doctor's control room.

The Master gestured for the Doctor to lower his hands. As the Doctor did so, he stepped back to the TARDIS console and swung the lever that closed the TARDIS doors. Now the Doctor was with his enemy, his nemesis. It was just like two scorpions vying with each other in a glass jar. The killing jar, the Doctor thought inwardly while staring at the Master.

The Doctor took in the Master, in his "new body" of Tremas, the kind, gentle Trakenite scientist. The Master had trimmed away Tremas's long grey beard, sideburns, and moustache, leaving only a goatee.

The long flowing hair Tremas had combed over was now brushed backwards into a ponytail. The Doctor saw the face of Tremas, but in the eyes was the Master. Even while stealing the body of Tremas, the Master had a certain vanity about his appearance.

The Doctor could almost see that rotted, decayed, dark brown and black husk as if Tremas's body were a costume to unzip, slide into, and wear as his own.

"So tell me then, have you come to the Null before or after murdering Tremas and stealing his body, or after the many encounters we will have over time?"

The Master smirked and seemed to relax, yet held his TCE at the ready.

"Does it matter, Doctor?" the Master replied. "I am at the Null, and all our...encounters over time have happened and shall happen as seen in the quantum time stream."

The Doctor looked at the Master and gave a slight smile at the Master's obvious evasion. That seemed to annoy the Master, and after a few moments, he answered.

"And the Trakenite betrayed me as Keeper, Doctor. On Traken, the laws of the Traken Empire were punishable by death. But rather than waste the Trakenite's carcass. I took the husk as my new body, my new vessel. As I told you once when I was Keeper, such waste would have been irrational."

"Waste? Well, you wasted, destroyed an innocent man, all to continue your existence."

The Master laughed heartily, nearly a cackle of amusement.

"Innocent? The Trakenite was homosexual, and the previous Keeper chose him rather than have a scandal from his sexual escapades with young Luvic and other men. And I have put this body to much better use than the Trakenite. My knowledge and experience are far beyond anything he would have."

"But not your body to use..." the Doctor retorted.

"Mine by right and by Keepership, Doctor. The Trakenite's knowledge could not compare to that of a Time Lord of twelve generations. His destiny ultimately was to become mine, my new body, a new vessel. The only thing the Trakenite had was his body."

"However you state it, it's still the murder of an innocent man, using his body for your own twisted, evil schemes."

The Master shook his head in disdain and a kind of amusement.

"As I told that daughter of the Trakenite on Logopolis, 'his body remains useful...' and it is mine now. I told her she should be grateful, as I'm using her homosexual father's body and not wasting it on Traken."

"Wasting it? The body was Tremas's..."

"I told her that she was lucky," the Master stated. "She could have been the few drops of semen in Luvic's beard, on his body, or a stain on her homosexual father's gown. But the body of the Trakenite is now mine."

"Yours?" the Doctor asked with a faint rhetorical tone.

"Yes, everything in this body is mine. The hair between the buttocks, the follicles on his head, the hair of his beard, the skin from the tip of the penis to his toenails; his nipples, the body is mine after my new life and thirteenth regeneration."

The Doctor was about to contradict the Master, but the Master continued his self-important statement.

"That daughter, when I asked her what she would do with her homosexual father's body if I left it..."

"What did Nyssa say?" the Doctor asked. Nyssa had never mentioned this conversation.

"She said..." the Master answered, "she said that she would bury the body in the ground for some Trakenite belief of the body being connected to the soul... put this useful meat suit into the ground to decay and rot. While it was old, out of shape, it was useful."

The Doctor smiled. He knew Nyssa would have followed Trakenite beliefs, and with Tremas gone, his body was... well, now the Master's new body.

"Well, it would be the same as your previous body," the Doctor said, leaning against the TARDIS console.

"My previous body was worn out, Doctor, even after the power of the Eye of Harmony on Gallifrey in the monolith rebuilt my decayed, rotted form..."

"So a new body, even that of an old man?" the Doctor asked, knowing the Master's answer.

"The Trakenite was the one who got caught in my trap, a simple paralysis field... had it been another, then I would have taken them. The body of an old man, out of shape and time-worn, was

better than dying. The Trakenite at fifty to sixty Terran years was not my first choice, but it became my only choice."

"How practical of you," said the Doctor.

"Yes, Doctor," the Master said. "Your sentiment is showing. That long-haired, bearded old homosexual, the Trakenite, was wasting his body...as you said about Traken, a bunch of sheep, and an empire of people being nice to each other."

"Thus murdering an innocent man, stealing his body, and using it for your evil, diabolical ends..." the Doctor said flatly.

"I needed a new body, a new vessel, a shell, if you will, Doctor. My own body could not regenerate, so I needed another. When one is drowning in a sea of death, one grabs the first piece of flotsam that comes by and holds on...the Trakenite was that and served my need."

"Tremas was flotsam, and not a living person, a human being even as a Trakenite?"

The Master smiled, recalling the moment he had Tremas paralysed in his trap, touching his TARDIS.

"The Trakenite bastard was mine, Doctor, the moment he touched my TARDIS and became my new body."

"But why him, though? You merely used your powers as Keeper to bounce him around the room..."

"He stepped into my trap, Doctor...his curiosity as a scientist made him mine. I was desperate, and that gave me the desire, the will to survive. I did not question when the Trakenite fell into my web, and like any spider, I seized upon my prize, my second chance for survival."

"I imagine after the Source overload, you would be desperate for a new form," the Doctor commented.

"That backwash of power from the Source was only possible, Doctor," the Master said, "because of your meddling and the treachery of the Trakenite. In that sense, he was mine, and your fault as you escaped from me."

The Doctor found the Master's logic, his fitting the facts to a conclusion—the Master must survive, somehow, anyhow, and it was tiresome.

"You stood near me, gloating," the Doctor said, "and that was your mistake."

"Yes, Doctor, a...costly mistake I have had to consider over time," said the Master. "But that's why when the Trakenite was paralysed against my TARDIS, I did not...gloat, but merged and slid into him for my regeneration and new life. I wasted no time regenerating before my powers as Keeper faded and waned away."

"Was it painful then?" asked the Doctor, looking into his eyes.

"The merging, joining with the Trakenite? No, that was almost...orgasmic..."

"No, I mean the overload from the Source into the then Keeper, Meklur...you..." the Doctor said, correcting the Master.

The Master glared at the unwelcome memory of how the Trakenite Source Manipulator had overloaded and fed back, first into the Melkur statue, which was the Master's TARDIS. And then the power had coursed through him and his decayed, rotted body.

"The agonising pain I suffered made me take the Trakenite body a poetic justice," the Master said in a tight tone. "His body was mine after he helped you stop and betray me."

"How agonising was it then?" the Doctor asked.

The Master gave a grim, wicked smile to the Doctor and then spoke.

"I was like a moth caught between two ends of an arc light, Doctor. I had spent years in my decaying husk of a body, feeling nothing. Then, after hearing the warning alarm on my TARDIS console, and touching a switch, all that power...it was as if my body was alive with energy, and I felt an agonising pain coursing through my rotted form."

"I hope it was not as painful..." the Doctor said.

"Once the power washed over my TARDIS like the Melkur statue, it found and flowed over the controls, and then the power coursed into me. My body smoked, burned, and cooked. I could feel the power surging through my bare, naked feet. If I had not wrenched myself free of the console and gotten to my other TARDIS, the backwash of power from the Source would have burned and

disintegrated me. As the Source power did, the Melkur TARDIS was destroyed."

"Glad that happened," the Doctor said cheerfully.

At the time, the Master had paralysed the Doctor, and while he gloated, Adric and Nyssa had set up the overload of the Source. The Doctor recalled how, once he was free, he bolted, jumping through a wall and leaving the Master to smoke and burn in the conflagration of the Melkur statue—then the Master's TARDIS. The Doctor thought he could have tackled the decayed, rotted form that was the Master and smashed his head against the floor. The Doctor had run to remain alive; he would have been immolated in the destruction of Melkur TARDIS. The Master had done the same, running for his spare TARDIS.

"That made getting my new body, a new form, all the sweeter," the Master commented.

"Afterwards, I was in faint but persistent pain and could smell my cooked flesh. That old long-haired bearded man was not my first choice, but his body was a relief, and it shall and has served me well, especially once I escape the Null."

"And how do you plan to do that, now that your body is Trakenite, a variation on human, not a Gallifreyan?"

"You mean avoid Rassilon's fail-safe for the Null, Doctor?"

"Yes?" said the Doctor. "Rassilon foresaw that some Time Lords might have companions, and if they did come to the Null, he

wanted to ensure no knowledge was retained, to avoid destroying the temporal integrity of the space-time continuum."

"I am aware, Doctor," the Master said. "I know that when you saved Gallifrey from the Sontaran invasion, your mind was blanked and your memory of it erased."

The Doctor realised Rassilon's same fail-safe for the quantum stream of the Null had been used when he constructed the ultimate weapon—the DeMat gun, which erased anything from all time. Rassilon had kept that knowledge from the Doctor, erasing the Doctor's memory when he destroyed the Sontaran Storr; Although Borusa later described it to him, the adventure when the Sontarans invaded time.

"But Rassilon's fail-safe is for non-Gallifreyans," reminded the Master, "and I am a Gallifreyan..."

"In the body of Tremas, a Trakenite..." said the Doctor. "Your mind is still the same, evil, twisted piece of work, but your form is non-Gallifreyan."

"We shall see, Doctor," said the Master as he moved, keeping the TCE on the Doctor. "My plan will avoid any risk of Rassilon's fail-safe."

"What plan, then?" asked the Doctor.

"A plan that is so simple, I think even you will find it to be brilliant, ingenious, Doctor."

"How so, then?" the Doctor asked, knowing the Master could be clever, cunning, and sometimes brilliant even for a renegade Time Lord.

The Master smirked and moved backwards to the TARDIS doors.

"Simple, Doctor. Time ram."

The Doctor suppressed a shiver and then a shudder at the memory. The Doctor had caused a time ram when the Master had summoned Kronos, a time monster, and destroyed the civilisation of Atlantis. Two TARDIS time capsule machines could not occupy the same space and time. The Doctor realised the Master was grasping at straws, but there was a slim chance a time ram could work...just barely.

"I see you recall, Doctor. Your idea to materialise a TARDIS around another will create a 'bubble' of time and space, but outside the time and space of the universe," explained the Master with the tone of a professor giving a lecture.

"And then, you are, in theory, in principle, outside time and space, so beyond the limits, including Rassilon's fail-safe."

"Correct, Doctor. Your idea might have stemmed from desperation, but now it is one of practicality."

The Doctor wondered whether creating a bubble of space-time within a TARDIS by time ram would be...possible; although the Doctor knew Rassilon, as a clever, cunning engineer, would not have allowed a fail-safe in the biology of a Gallifreyan, a Time Lord, to be easily overcome.

"You can consider the limits and boundaries of Rassilon's fail-safe, Doctor, but I would rather risk it," said the Master ominously.

"You can," the Doctor said, "but I will not, shall not do this. The time ram was dangerous under the normal conditions in our universe, here at the Null..."

"Here at the Null, the quantum inflexion point across the multiverse, Doctor," stated the Master, "we are not in normal conditions... that is one reason why it will work."

The Doctor shook his head and smiled at the Master, who glared wrathfully.

"Well, it is simple then; I will not do it," the Doctor said finally, seeing the anger in the Master's posture and demeanour.

The Master straightened and moved closer, taking a few steps toward the Doctor, holding his TCE in a threatening stance.

"If you do not, Doctor, you will die. The time ram might destroy us, but if you do not try, I will destroy you... Either way, I will have the satisfaction of destroying you."

The Master gave a knowing smile of satisfaction.

The Doctor smiled at the Master; it seemed his nemesis, his enemy, always wanted the satisfaction of destroying him.

The Master grew impatient and moved closer, seemingly eager to use his TCE and reduce the Doctor to a mere doll-sized figure by matter condensation.

"You destroy me; you destroy your only chance to escape the Null..." the Doctor stated. "You will not and cannot use your TCE."

The Master's annoyed, angry expression turned to amusement and glee.

"Can't I, Doctor? Perhaps a simple demonstration will suffice," the Master said, standing on both legs, hands on the TCE, pointed at the Doctor. The Master had a smug smile of triumph and anticipation as he stared at the Doctor, TCE at the ready.

Chapter 5 Trapped

The Master strode forward as the Doctor stepped back, leaned against his TARDIS console, and touched a small switch on the underside. The Master stood firmly on both feet, leaning slightly forward in his aggressive stance, raising the TCE. The Doctor waited expectantly and, with a casual, fluid movement, put one hand in a pocket of his greatcoat.

"If you don't help me escape, the Null Doctor," the Master said in a threatening, commanding tone, "then this... shall be your fate."

Pointing the TCE at the dark brown, ornate hatstand next to the TARDIS view screen, the dark wood contrasted with the clean, sterile white of the TARDIS control room.

The Master smiled, squeezed the trigger on the TCE, and the end of the tissue compression eliminator glowed. He waited for the dark brown hatstand to glow, shrink, and compress as matter condensation occurred.

Yet nothing happened as the Master watched and waited; the dark brown hatstand remained untouched and immutable. The Master realised he had been tricked somehow and turned to the Doctor.

The Doctor had awaited that moment of no effect to baffle and surprise his enemy, and then in those few seconds, he struck. With a lunge, the Doctor grabbed the TCE with one hand and, with the other, shoved the Master, knocking him off balance.

The TCE was flung from both Time Lords and landed near the dark brown hatstand, clattering on the TARDIS floor. The Master's dark form attempted to find his balance, but the Doctor's shoving threw him to the floor. The Doctor watched as the Master fell and then stumbled forward, the coattails of his black suit flapping around as he did.

The Master moved forward, reaching for his TCE, which lay on the floor. His black leather-gloved hand grabbed the TCE, and the Master was ready when he felt a sting from behind in his right buttock. Something had stung or jabbed into his buttock, and the Master rose and turned, but then felt a slow paralysis spread through him.

#

The Doctor had pulled the Janis Thorn out, and after freeing it from the small wine cork it was embedded in, he had stuck it into the Master's right buttock while he was bent over, struggling to retrieve his TCE and straighten up. The Janis Thorn was weak, causing paralysis but not death. Leela had favoured Janis Thorns, paralysing and then causing the victim's death.

The Master was paralysed; he had almost straightened up, and his hand still held the TCE. The Doctor pulled the Janis Thorn from the Master's buttocks and placed the used thorn into the cork, returning it to a pocket. He reached into another pocket and could feel another Janis Thorn.

The Master was paralysed by the neurotoxin in the Janis Thorn, and his face was a mix of surprise and outrage. The Doctor strode

to confront his nemesis, and the Master's eyes shifted to focus on him. The Doctor took the TCE from the Master's gloved hand and placed it into an inner pocket of his greatcoat.

"Now that we've settled that," the Doctor said in a casual, conversational tone, "I wanted to have a small talk, and then we shall settle old scores, eh?"

#

The Master could do nothing; his body was frozen and numb, and he knew he was at the Doctor's mercy, and the TCE was now on the Doctor's person.

"How?" the Master stammered, managing to force some words out.

"How did I stop your TCE?" the Doctor replied. "Simple, I reinforced the temporal grace with a dimensional stabiliser field I modified to work, though only for a short duration at maximum power level."

The Doctor smiled, walked to the TARDIS console, and touched the switch; he knew that the enhancement to the temporal grace of the TARDIS was off, neutralised for now.

"Doctor... what... now?" the Master gasped.

#

The Doctor strode to face the Master, still frozen, his eyes shifting, and the Doctor perceived something the Master was experiencing: fear.

"Well now," the Doctor said, "I will destroy you with your TCE. It shall be poetic justice, as you said. I will take your matter, the condensed dead body of Tremas, to his daughter Nyssa. I'm sure knowing her father's body, Tremas being free, will bring her some comfort. Knowing you are dead, and not using your form, your body."

The Master gasped, "You... will... kill..."

"Yes, I will; your end has been postponed by killing and stealing the form and body of Tremas, but your end has caught up to you."

"No, you can't..."

"I cannot? Well, I can and will. The Janis Thorn was weaker; I could not have you paralysed and then die. I wanted the satisfaction of using your TCE on you and freeing Tremas's soul and spirit so it could be at rest, and have a memento to give to his daughter."

The Doctor could see the Master move his fingers, as Janis Thorn's effects were wearing off.

"Well now, Master, time to die..." the Doctor said. Reaching into his pocket, he felt the Janis Thorn but then decided to use the Master's TCE. Stepping back, the Doctor smiled at the Master, who was still frozen, paralysed, now with a look of panic in his eyes.

The Doctor reached into his inside pocket and felt the cold metallic case of the TCE. He pulled it out, thinking it was a vile, evil weapon... killing but evaporating the object or person in the process. A person or object reduced into a small miniature of the former self. The process was a total and complete condensation and compression of matter.

The Doctor adjusted the TCE and stepped back from the Master, who stood paralysed, fear and panic now in his eyes. The Doctor found the trigger, held the TCE comfortably in his hand, and raised it.

"Time to settle old scores," the Doctor said.

#

The Master seemed to shiver and shake, speaking. "Doctor... wait," the Master forced out, somewhat shaking like a puppet in the hands of a drunken puppeteer.

"Wait for the end?" the Doctor said, levelling the TCE to face the Master's face. He saw terror in the Master’s eyes, and the Master knew the effects of the TCE.

"No... Tremas... alive," the Master gasped. "Alive... in... me..."

"Tremas?" The Doctor was surprised; the Master had never mentioned the name of the man whose body he now used for his evil, twisted schemes.

"Yes, alive... in me."

"Not for long," the Doctor said, puzzled. He wondered what game the Master was playing.

"No, alive... in me; you kill him."

The Master's sudden facial change, one of smugness, convinced the Doctor to wait... for the moment. If the Master was correct, and then if Tremas was still alive, he would kill both the Master and Tremas.

"Then I will wait for you to explain," the Doctor said. "But keep your distance, or I will kill you simply to avoid any trouble."

#

"Very... well," the Master managed to wheeze in response and waited. The Doctor put the TCE in his waist pocket and stepped back, waiting for the effect of the Janis Thorn to fade. He stood near the switch; he could reactivate the intensified temporal grace if needed, but it was simpler to keep the TCE close.

The Doctor was using his yo-yo to pass the time, but he kept one eye on the Master. Fear, terror, and panic could make the Master foolish, impulsive, and desperate. The Doctor did not want to take any chances.

The Master fell to his knees, then onto his hands, but soon stood up, straightening his black suit. He turned to face the Doctor, whose hand rested on the TCE in his waist pocket. The Doctor saw the Master's eyes fall upon the TCE, and the Master relaxed, realising the foolhardy nature of anything impulsive. The Doctor

had granted the Master a reprieve, a temporary delay, but not a full pardon from his execution.

"I underestimated you, Doctor," the Master said, "both in tactics and resolve."

"Your overconfidence is your weakness. So don't underestimate me now..." the Doctor replied. "Now, you said Tremas..."

The Master looked at the Doctor and then paced slightly.

"Tremas is alive in me, Doctor, inside my mind. When I joined and slid into his body, I did not overwrite his mind or destroy him."

"Not out of kindness or compassion," the Doctor said flatly.

"No, Doctor. But the Trakenite knows the issues with my new body—any medical or physical idiosyncrasies known only to him. So I needed Tremas to avoid any unknowns."

The Doctor looked at the Master, who spoke with the tone of a teacher explaining a lesson. The Master's logic made sense, but the Doctor wanted proof, not mere conjecture or supposition.

"Let me speak to Tremas, then..." the Doctor said.

"No, Doctor! I cannot allow the Trakenite, Tremas, to regain his body...my body. And after so long being my guest in my mind, I doubt he wants to emerge."

The Master placed his hand on the TCE and stared at the Doctor.

"Then you are lying, and now I shall settle our score, once and for all."

"Doctor, wait...Tremas is alive in me; perhaps there is another way."

"Another way?" the Doctor asked.

"Yes, we could...link minds, like the game of mind-bending by Time Lords," the Master stated. "Only to link minds, and then you can make contact with Tremas's mind inside of me."

The Doctor frowned. That was reasonable, and if there was a chance...the Doctor had no real choice.

"I have the apparatus in my TARDIS, Doctor...we can connect via the TARDIS console..." the Master anticipated and explained the Doctor's next question.

"Very well, then..." the Doctor said. "To your TARDIS and no tricks...I still have your TCE."

"I know, Doctor, and am simply giving you proof that Tremas is still alive, as you want proof."

The Doctor flipped the lever on the TARDIS console, and the doors swung open.

"You lead," the Doctor said, pulling the TCE from his waist pocket and gesturing with it.

The Master turned on the heel of his black shoe and strode out, too confident, the Doctor thought.

#

The Master's TARDIS was not unlike the Doctor's, only it had a dark, shadowy style, with walls a dark brown and occasionally black in the faint light.

The Master strode in, confident in his own TARDIS, and walked toward the console. After activating some controls, the console hummed.

"I thought it was better to use my TARDIS, as it is telepathically linked to me, Doctor, although we could use your TARDIS. But the Trakenite, Tremas... is in my mind."

The Doctor nodded and then looked. There were some bare metal slots on the TARDIS console, and the Doctor knew he and the Master would place their hands on them, then focus and concentrate.

The Doctor thought back to when he fought Morbius on Karn; the apparatus was cruder, but still the same. Only Morbius had won, but in the process, the wiring in the transparent brain case had shorted out, causing Morbius to slip into an insane, primitive state.

The Doctor shook off these memories and watched the Master.

The Master looked at the Doctor and removed his black leather gloves.

The Doctor looked at the TCE and set the control. "Now then, we shall link minds, but your weapon is set to fire if I lose contact while holding it. One of your settings, I presume."

"You presume correctly, Doctor. But I will stand on the opposite side of the console control when we link minds... so have no fear."

The Doctor wanted to laugh, but simply stood near the console.

The Master leaned forward and, slightly bending over, placed both hands on the TARDIS console.

The Doctor held the TCE like a kid hanging onto a toy, but his fingers touched the bare metal surface of the TARDIS console.

Quickly, the Doctor felt his mind drawn, focusing, linking. The Master watched and closed his eyes; the Doctor did the same. At first, the Doctor heard the normal hum and background noise of the TARDIS control room, but then he felt his mind floating and being pulled into a dark ether, and then the Doctor was in blackness, an oblivion.

#

The Doctor opened his eyes and found he was in the audience hall for the Keeper of Traken, at least the inner chamber. The Doctor looked around and saw a familiar figure on the Keeper's throne chair.

The dark gown, with green hues, and the grey-haired old man, who looked around in surprise... Tremas.

"No, not again!" Tremas said in fear and panic. "The fiend is going to come for me and torment me! No! No more!"

"Tremas!" the Doctor shouted, and Tremas saw the Doctor but flinched.

"It's me, the Doctor, Tremas!"

"No, you won't trick me again, you foul monster... You have my body, but not me..."

The Doctor grabbed Tremas's arm by the wrist and held it, causing Tremas to focus on him.

"Tremas, it is the Doctor. Remember, three-three-seven?"

Tremas seemed to recall the last three digits for the controls of the Source on Traken.

"Doctor, if it is you, help me... please."

"Tremas, I am trying to help you..."

The Master seemed to emerge from a shadow, not in the form using Tremas's body, but as his rotted, decayed, skeletonised form in a more deteriorated, desiccated robe. His teeth were smiling, the lips over the teeth, the eyes alive, focused, almost eager.

"Doctor, I see you have found your... friend," the Master said.

Tremas looked horrified to see the Master in his previous form.

Tremas tried to rise, to run away, but the Master extended a black, decayed hand, and with a gesture, Tremas was forced back into the Keeper's throne.

"Remain silent and still, my body," the Master said as he moved toward Tremas.

"You see, Doctor," the Master said as he stood alongside Tremas. The Master ran his black tongue over his teeth and then along the side of Tremas's face, in a gesture of ownership and affection.

"The Trakenite is mine," the Master said. For emphasis, he took some of Tremas's long hair and brought it to his mouth, where his teeth grinned, and kissed the hair.

"And he is here," the Doctor said. "How do I know this is not some trickery or deception?"

The Master ran a black finger along the side of Tremas's face, then leaned in, and a black tongue flicked over the teeth, caressed the side of Tremas's face, and brushed against his thick sideburns.

"Stop tormenting him then," the Doctor said, partially convinced that Tremas was indeed Tremas.

The Master scoffed, moving away from Tremas, who recoiled but remained stuck in the Keeper's elaborate throne.

"I will leave you to talk to your... friend, Doctor. But I assure you, it is Tremas. I took his body and used his form but kept him within me... a reward for being my new vessel, my new body."

#

The Master turned, and his rotted, decayed form seemed to evaporate and vanish. The Doctor was alone, the Master gone for the moment, just the Doctor and Tremas, who stood. Grabbing the Doctor's arm, Tremas got on his knees, begging.

"Please, Doctor, just kill me. I have seen the evil, wicked things that fiend has used me for, and felt the pain and misery he has caused to my body. So take a blunt object and bash in my skull, kill me, Doctor."

The Doctor felt a large sense of pity for Tremas. When the Doctor thought the Master had slid into and merged with Tremas, he had erased Tremas's mind. Instead, the Master had kept him alive, and poor Tremas had to watch his body being used, and the Master channelled any of the pain he experienced into Tremas like a lightning rod.

Poor Tremas had lost his colleagues, his wife, his chance to become Keeper, and then his world...the last the Doctor knew, Tremas had seen as the Master had allowed the entropy of the universe to spread, destroying Traken.

The Doctor thought the Master was destroying him, and then, using his form, Tremas would not know of the other things the Master had done to him, his body, and others. Seeing the chaos, murder, and destruction, the Doctor could understand Tremas's desire to die.

"Tremas," the Doctor said. "You must wait, I cannot kill you, but I will help..."

"You're the fiend," Tremas said, rising and then shoving, pushing the Doctor away in defiance.

"I won't play this trickery anymore...I don't want to be here...just go...leave me and stop your tricks to torment me. You have my body, but not me, you disgusting, rotted, fiend...leave me!"

The Doctor was about to continue to explain, but he realised that Tremas had gone mad in his time as the Master's prisoner, within his own body, watching, seeing, and feeling, while the Master controlled his body.

"I shall see you again, Tremas..." the Doctor said, but Tremas had vanished, probably into a dark corner of the mind of the Master, hiding, not wanting to be tortured or tormented again.

The Doctor thought that the Master probably had teased and tormented Tremas in revenge; the Doctor had said the Master would delay an execution to pull the wings off a fly. And so, Tremas was the fly caught in the web, with the Master slowly pulling off his wings...

The Doctor focused, wanting to break the link and return to the world and the Null. The Doctor had some tough decisions, but Tremas's suffering would make his plans all the easier; the Master had miscalculated the Doctor's sentiment and compassion.

The Doctor focused and found himself again floating in an etheric state, his mind returning to the physical world, and his body, leaving Tremas trapped within his own body, and a prisoner of the Master's mind.

Chapter 6 Escaped

The Doctor finally sensed he was back in the physical world, in the TARDIS control room of the Master, and he had to blink several times as his mind adjusted to being in a physical body. Then, as the Doctor gazed and his mind began to see and perceive things, he was shocked to find himself staring back at him.

The Doctor reached out, looking for a mirror, but found none; however, he did see the sleeves of the black fabric of the suit worn by the Master.

#

"Welcome back, Doctor," the Master said, but in the Doctor's voice—somewhat. The Doctor realised he was hearing his voice as others did, not from inside his own body.

"Perhaps I should say, 'Welcome back to your new body, your new home,'" the Master said with brazen, smug arrogance.

The Doctor moved and felt shorter; this body felt different somehow. He looked and saw he was in the black suit of the Master, and then glanced at the small reflective surface on the Master's TARDIS console. The smug smirk of overconfidence was gone, and the facial expression was baffled and puzzled.

"What is this?!" the Doctor exclaimed, realising that the Master had swapped bodies. He had entered the Master's mind, and the Master, upon leaving the rendezvous with Tremas, had moved

into his unoccupied body, stealing the Doctor's body. The Doctor felt his face; the texture was different, and he could feel the hair of the goatee around his lips and mouth.

"I want..." the Doctor said as he moved around the TARDIS console, but the Master held up the TCE that the Doctor had once held onto and now possessed.

"You want, Doctor?" the Master asked. "You fell into my trap, and I have escaped the Trakenite body for yours, Doctor. It was a mistake to let him live, but he was still useful; your sentiment kept you from killing me to avoid killing him. But now your body, Doctor, a Gallifreyan, is mine at last!"

"The one you originally wanted?" the Doctor asked rhetorically.

"Oh, yes, Doctor. When you defeated me on Traken, and I had to take the Trakenite's body, it was only a temporary husk for me to live and continue my ultimate plan. I always intended to eventually have your body, just as I originally did."

"You won't find it as useful," the Doctor said pedantically, knowing the Master would not believe him.

"More than the Trakenite bastard's old, time-worn body..." the Master replied. "I risked rejuvenating the Trakenite from an old man to a younger one, but yours..."

"My body, my Gallifreyan form?" the Doctor asked humorously, with a tone of mirth. "You'll find it will not serve you..."

"But I will, and shall, Doctor. I have your body, so I can leave the Null, and I have eight regenerations, allowing me to live on and master all matter in the universe—not the multiverse."

"The same dream as before..." the Doctor quipped.

"Yes, and the best part is I will not be accountable if the High Council of the Time Lords finds I have transgressed the First Law of Time. After all, it will be you, your body that will be culpable if the Time Lords interfere in my plans."

The Doctor's mind had been feeling and perceiving the different sensations in this body, the Master's former host body of Tremas, but the Master's intentions and plan seemed clear.

"I will go back to the various times we met, Doctor, and then assist my other self in winning, or at least help 'you' achieve victory and what I wanted... and having experienced all those events, I can then re-experience and alter them so that I achieve my goals... but in your body."

#

"The Time Lords will not let you meddle in the continuum of time and space," said the Doctor. He rubbed the mouth of Tremas, feeling the goatee that the Master had in the body of Tremas.

"Perhaps, Doctor, but it is you they will seek, perhaps in an earlier time," the Master said, now moving but keeping the TCE trained on the Doctor.

"Perhaps so," the Doctor admitted, but the Master came closer, ready to shoot the Doctor, killing him and Tremas with the TCE. The Master stopped and smiled, backing up to his TARDIS console. The Master operated the mechanism to open the TARDIS doors.

#

"I would kill you, Doctor," said the Master, "but somehow being trapped in the Null, unable to leave because of Rassilon's fail-safe, and knowing you cannot stop me as I turn defeats into victories is more satisfying."

"Don't be too confident; that's your weakness," the Doctor chided.

"Quite so, Doctor. But you have the Trakenite's body, his form as your own. Although I should caution you, the Trakenite is mad, so you'll have to keep him in check in your mind. He will fight at times... like a bad thought or memory surfacing at the worst possible moment. Now it is time for me to leave. I thank you for giving me my new body at last, now free to escape and continue my plans."

#

Giving a mock bow, the Master turned, ensuring his direction. He backed up to the TARDIS door and then slipped through it. Both closed automatically as he left, leaving the Doctor, now in the body of Tremas, alone in the TARDIS control room.

The Doctor activated the viewscreen and saw the Master head toward his TARDIS and enter it. The police box light blinked, and

the TARDIS dematerialised, returning to the Master's and Doctor's universe.

The Doctor, after a few moments, realised something about Tremas's body, and it puzzled him...a weight inside him, a pressure or heaviness...in his bowels and bladder. The Doctor understood he was in Tremas's body, and, after the Master merged with Tremas and rejuvenated his body, he received everything: Tremas's clothing, Tremas's body, and then the contents of Tremas's bladder and bowel.

The Doctor could feel the weight in his bowel, full of faeces, and the pressure in his bladder from the urine. Yet the Master did not defecate the excrement nor urinate the contents of Tremas's bladder. The Master had kept both as some kind of disgusting souvenir.

The Doctor realised the Master had gone from a rotted, nearly lifeless husk into a younger body, that of Tremas...the Master had relished the physical sensation of being full...of bio-waste. With a grunt, the Doctor flexed Tremas's buttocks and pushed the excrement deeper into his bowel.

The Doctor would have to answer the physical needs of Tremas's body. Tremas must have been on his way to the toilet when the Master captured him and took his body, leaving Traken with Tremas's body and the waste inside it.

The Doctor thought for a moment and decided to relax, to reach Tremas. Tremas could regain control of his body, but the Doctor

was disgusted by the idea of using Tremas's body, even if he were forced to use it.

The Doctor could sense Tremas's mind; it was like a nagging doubt or recurrent thought, a feeling, but it was Tremas's mind trying to break through the block to his own body and take control.

The Doctor relaxed and could feel Tremas's mind emerging...and then the Doctor saw himself watching, while his body, or Tremas's body, was moving and acting.

#

Tremas was in control, and the Doctor was an occupant and observer.

"At last," Tremas shrieked loudly, "I'm free of that fiend, that monster..."

Tremas touched the TARDIS console and then the walls, even his own body still garbed in the Master's ridiculous intergalactic butler suit.

"To be free to walk, talk, touch, and be rid of that fiend..." Tremas declared, and the Doctor sensed a dark euphoria, a sense of wanting...to die.

"The fiend will not use me again," Tremas said, bringing his head down against the TARDIS console.

The Doctor saw a flash and then faint stars from the hard impact of Tremas's head. Tremas then stood and ran at full speed,

colliding with the dark brown wall of the Master's TARDIS. Tremas fell to the ground, dazed and somewhat stunned.

The Doctor felt the frisson of shock as he realised that now Tremas had control of his own body; his desire to die, to kill himself, was playing out.

The Doctor felt panic; if Tremas's suicide attempt succeeded, the Doctor would die inside Tremas's body.

Like it or not, Tremas's body was the life support and vessel for the Doctor's consciousness, mind, and soul. Tremas, standing and steadying himself, brought the Doctor back to the moment.

Focusing, the Doctor could feel Tremas's mind, and he pushed Tremas back into the shadows of his mind, taking control of Tremas's body.

Tremas screamed and then faded, forced to be suppressed under the control and constraint of the Doctor's mind.

The Doctor was even more disgusted, having to force Tremas into submission, but he realised that suicide would end all hopes of getting his own body back and freeing Tremas at last.

Poor Tremas was becoming a pitstop for different minds occupying and living inside his Trakenite body, at least temporarily, the Doctor thought to himself.

The Doctor looked at himself in a small mirror on one of the Master's TARDIS console panels. There was a nasty bruise on the forehead and some faint scratches on the face. Tremas had

been stunned and done some minor damage to his body, but the Doctor was not in a bleeding or brain-damaged state.

The Doctor needed to be in control of Tremas's body. The weight in his bowel and bladder made the Doctor realise he needed to take care of his new body's needs—or those of Tremas. The Doctor pondered if the Master was not eating, digesting, and excreting waste from Tremas's body, how then did the Master heal?

The Doctor found that puzzling, but then resolved to explore the Master's TARDIS, the various rooms and chambers. Moving his head and stretching in the body of Tremas, the Doctor decided to wander through the Master's TARDIS; he felt safe, in a sense, in the Master's former body of Tremas.

All the Master's booby traps were for outsiders, strangers, and invaders of his TARDIS. But now this TARDIS was the Doctor's, and so he would explore, perhaps finding some answers and revelations about the Master.

The Doctor saw the door that led deeper into the corridors and hallways of the TARDIS, strode to it, opened the door, and began his explorations of his nemesis.

Chapter 7 Visitor

The corridors of the Master's TARDIS were strikingly similar to the Doctor's TARDIS. Aside from being a dark, mahogany-style brownish-black colour, the corridors formed a winding maze, a Gallifreyan labyrinth. Only the Master was the Minotaur in this particular labyrinth.

The Master had no companions or guests, or any that lived very long, and the Doctor found the corridors seemed to create a long cycle, a circuit that looped.

A few rooms the Doctor found were either empty or contained components of Gallifreyan manufacture, fragments of Time Lord technology. While the Doctor was a clutterbug with his greatcoat, the Master was with his TARDIS. Although this particular TARDIS belonged to the Doctor now, it was focused on the Master's—or the Doctor's—bio-patterns.

The Doctor found a door and opened it; beyond was a bedroom of sorts. The style reminded the Doctor of his office when he was inducted as Lord President of the High Council of the Time Lords.

It reminded him that the Master had some opulent furniture, including a bed with a large canopy above it and a large wardrobe. The Doctor opened the wardrobe and found a mix-and-match of suits from the Master's previous incarnations, along with the rotted, desiccated black-and-brown cowled robe he had worn.

Behind the clothes was a clothing synthesiser, an advanced device that took a sample of any fabric or cloth and could then

create a form of clothing specified. The Doctor realised that the Master's suit, the one he wore, was the same fabric as Tremas's long, flowing gown—almost a thick satin-velvet fabric—and the Master had used it to make his suit. The Doctor did not find any of Tremas's clothing in the wardrobe, so he closed the doors.

A smaller door was across the room, in the shadow of the wardrobe. The Doctor opened that door and saw that there was a very elegant bathroom.

Not like the bathroom on his TARDIS, the one Leela and her companions had found, again when the Doctor was Lord President. There was an ornate toilet made of a white-silver material, a large sink, and multiple mirrors. The floor was a nice, smooth yet not slick tile; clearly, the Master did not want to slip and fall and valued an opulent bathroom.

A large mirror concealed a door, and when he opened it, the Doctor found yet another room. It reminded him of his companion Adric's room on his old Type Forty TARDIS.

There was a large bed, a desk, and some smaller tables. The bed caught the Doctor's interest; he could see somewhat green slippers, more like short shoes, a ring with a pyramidal point, and a large black coverlet with green trim, but the Doctor realised what it was.

This was no coverlet, but a large gown, opened, the arms out, almost in the form of a snow angel. In the middle of the gown was a neatly folded rectangle of white fabric—an unworn loincloth.

All of the clothing, shoes, and a large, triangular, pointed ring were the possessions of one person—Tremas. The Master had created a shrine of sorts to the man he had entered, slid into, and taken control of, making his body his own—that of Tremas. And the Master liked to visit and commune with the relics and souvenirs of his host body, Tremas.

"Ah, ha," the Doctor said to himself, realising he had found where the Master had secreted Tremas's clothing and Consular ring.

The room was, in some ways, the Master's secret shrine to his host. The indentation on the bed showed the Master had lain there, on Tremas's long, flowing gown. The Master had kept other souvenirs and mementoes of his host, Tremas.

The Master had Tremas as his prisoner, hostage, and companion, relishing the remnants of his host, his clothing. Poor Tremas had to see his clothes, shoes, and ring as trophies of the Master, which the Master savoured.

#

At the thought of Tremas, the Doctor could sense his mind fighting, wanting to take control of his body. The Doctor realized with some mental force and effort to push Tremas's mind down that he could not allow that again. Tremas had been driven insane, forced to watch himself do things as the Master did them, and the Master relished Tremas's forced voyeurism.

The weight in his bowel and the pressure in his bladder brought the Doctor back to the moment, and he felt the other souvenirs

the Master had kept—Tremas's faeces and urine, the bodily waste he had inside him when the Master slid into him and stole his body. The Master had simply fled Traken; he had gotten what he wanted: a new body, form, and a thirteenth regeneration. Tremas had become that, only by a dark fate, not by the Master's intention or design. Just the wrong place and wrong time for Tremas, unhappily, but happily for the Master. Tremas became like the then food in his stomach, excrement in his bowels, and urine in his bladder...something the Master felt inside Tremas's body.

The Doctor pondered, ruminating about the past or the future...thinking of the Master when on Castrovalva, after his coming or next regeneration. The false city and culture created by the Master had used Adric's mathematical genius in a Hadron computation web. When the web had been smashed, the Master had run for his TARDIS.

The Doctor considered that poor Tremas was watching and experiencing the Master's panic, and yet inside the Master's new body of Tremas, his faeces had bounced around in Tremas's bowel, and the urine had sloshed in Tremas's bladder.

The Doctor thought about how the Castrovalvans had grabbed and restrained the Master...and how the Doctor and his companions had, or would, escape. Even then, the Master had his hideous mementoes inside his body, Tremas's waste, and Tremas. The Master had enjoyed them inside of him, only underestimating Tremas's resolve ultimately.

#

A thought then struck the Doctor; he would rid himself of the Master, at least restore some of Tremas. The Doctor smiled. First, he would do what Tremas would have done had the Master not stolen his body—use the toilet and empty his body of waste. The Master had not, keeping it as a sick and disgusting trophy of his new body, his new form.

The Doctor walked back to the door and the toilet. As he did, the Doctor thought that, after much time in a rotted, decayed body, the feeling of a full bowel with faeces and a full bladder of urine would feel pleasant; the Master in Tremas's body felt—alive, living.

The Doctor had found some classic Terran purgatives to help empty the bowel and bladder. After imbibing a bottle of a water-like liquid, the Doctor found it easy to pass and excrete the waste and empty his...Tremas's bladder.

Now that disgusting remnant was gone. The toilet was a more advanced Terran form; it used a slight vacuum, and the waste was flushed in a jet of water, followed by one that rinsed the anus and buttocks of the Doctor—or Tremas's body. The Doctor then stood and walked into the shrine with Tremas's gown, loincloth, shoes, and ring.

#

The Doctor felt disoriented and sat, then collapsed to his side on the bed, feeling Tremas's gown and loincloth as he was overcome.

The Doctor felt a memory surge; while their minds were separate and distinct, Tremas's mind had crossed with the Master's mind, and vice versa, inside the brain.

The Master had been the dominant mind in Tremas's body and brain, but Tremas's mind and brain had shared the same neurons and synapses. Thus, some memories and knowledge had been swapped, as if two telephone lines had crossed, sharing details of different conversations.

The Doctor felt a memory from the Master's mind that had lingered in Tremas's brain intruding, and he felt the numb coldness and the smell of burnt, rotting flesh...and then he was the Master as the senses of reality faded, and the looming memory slowly took control of him...waiting like a spider in a web.

#

The Master sat in his chair behind the control console of his second TARDIS, the longcase clock, not the Melkur statue. The Master could see the audience chamber where the Keeper of Traken would make an appearance in the throne chair room within the audience hall. On his monitor screens, the Master could see the bustle of people, the Consuls, and others in the room.

The Master silently cursed himself for his hubris, arrogance, and foolishness. The cold numbness of his decayed body was only accentuated by the pain and smell of his burned flesh. The reverse feedback from the Source had backwashed into the Melkur statue, destroying that TARDIS, but the energies flooded to the then Keeper—the Master.

The Master shifted in his chair, staring at the monitor screens and the controls while fighting to keep the pain from overwhelming him. The power had flowed through the Melkur statue, the TARDIS, and sought out the controller before intersecting. The Master felt something he had not experienced in some time—pain. Seeing his body burn and smoke had been shocking, but then, when he felt the agonising pain of his decayed body, he experienced the suffering from the immolation caused by the power of the Source flowing into him.

The Master had hobbled after wrenching himself from the Melkur TARDIS controls to his spare TARDIS, but during that time, he had been clenching the button on the console; the power of the Source manipulator was using his body as the ground for the energy.

The Master's bare, blackened, brown feet beneath his rotted, dessicated robe felt the power flowing in, and his fingertips sensed the energy entering him. In that brief moment, his body had been burned and seared; the rotted, decayed flesh suddenly alive with power, accompanied by the agonising pain of his flesh burning.

The Master grimaced and glanced in the mirror next to one monitor. He was still the same—a blackened, brown husk of decayed flesh, dying.

The Master knew his powers as Keeper were still present, connected to the Source manipulator. But he could feel the young, inexperienced Luvic taking control of the Source. The Master's

powers as former Keeper were slowly ebbing away, and soon, if he did not acquire a new body, a new vessel to replace his burned, decayed form, the Master would die.

That thought was bitter and unwelcome. The Master had been close...the Doctor's body would have been perfect, and with another eight regenerations, he would have won, defeating the Doctor and being restored as a Time Lord with regenerations to pursue his ultimate quest to be master of all matter.

But his arrogance, pride, and hubris had caused him to savour the moment too long, and then, when the Source manipulator had the backwash of power, his triumph was dashed, taken away from the jaws of victory.

So now the Master sat patiently, waiting for his opportunity, a chance. The Master knew he could have had a backup—a young Trakenite male, like Luvic, held as a hostage, ready for him.

Luvic was young, his body strong, but now he was Keeper, slowly mastering the Source...but not yet. The Master had squandered his opportunity as Keeper; now, with some lingering powers of the Keepership, he would not fail.

#

Suddenly, startling the Doctor, his memory shifted to Tremas. He was patting Nyssa's hand, having spoken and needing to check something.

Nyssa smiled at Tremas, her father, and left while Tremas let his arms fall to his sides, rubbing the fabric of the dark, flowing gown

he wore. Tremas watched Nyssa go, and he turned, looking around the inner sanctum of the audience hall.

A casual glance, but Tremas saw a strange object standing alone on the other side. Tremas flexed his buttocks underneath his flowing gown of black, green, and gold trim, beneath the loincloth he wore. Tremas felt the weight in his bowel and bladder; he needed to take care of his body's needs and excrete the waste—the faeces and urine in his body.

The food in his stomach from an earlier meal was digesting, and Tremas knew he had to make room. The casual flex of his buttocks pushed the faeces, the solid waste, deeper into his bowel, so that for the moment the urge to defecate was reduced. Having temporarily addressed that need, Tremas walked across the inner sanctum to the strange object, his gown dragging behind him on the floor as he strode across.

The Master sat, but then his attention was focused. He saw the Trakenite talking to his daughter, then turning and noticing the Master's TARDIS.

The Master's interest and hopeful desire soared as the Trakenite walked toward his TARDIS. The Master quickly touched a few controls and checked that the trap was set; there would be no second chances if the trap did not snare the Master's quarry.

The Master clenched his teeth in anticipation. The Trakenite was coming toward what was a longcase clock, but which was the Master's TARDIS, and the Master sat ready and waiting. The spider was waiting in the centre of its web.

Tremas strode across the inner sanctum, seeing the strange object that seemed old, archaic, and out of place in the inner sanctum of the audience hall. He approached it, seeing a door with glass that reflected the room, and a circular space with arrows that seemed to be some sort of indicator.

Tremas looked at it, puzzled yet fascinated by this strange object. Was it some device the Doctor had left behind?

Tremas was unsure, then reached up to the circular space, seeing various symbols in a circular arrangement. Was this some sort of control to move the arrows?

Tremas touched the clock face and felt a surge, a sting of electricity that travelled down his arm. Tremas tried to pull his hand and arm back but found them transfixed to the clock face, and the pain, followed by numbness, flowed into his arm, towards his body.

"Nyssa," Tremas bellowed with a rasping gasp, feeling the numbness spreading in his body, "help Nyssa."

Then Tremas felt himself frozen, his body numb, unable to respond to his mental effort to move. Except for his breathing and his eyes, Tremas was paralysed. Stuck by his hand to the strange object, his curiosity had led him into this imprisonment.

The Master saw the Trakenite approach, eyeing his TARDIS, a strange object in the inner sanctum. The Trakenite was so close that the Master could see his face up close, and his features...the facial expression was one of curiosity.

The Master checked the readout; the power in the paralysis field was strong enough to hold, but not so strong as to kill, paralysing the heart or the diaphragm that allowed for breathing.

#

There was a colour change on an indicator, and the Master saw the Trakenite twitch and then shiver slightly as he became paralysed.

The Master knew it would be only a matter of seconds before the Trakenite would be frozen, held in place.

The Master slowly rose from his chair, pressing a button on the console. The Master heard the Trakenite call for help and saw him move in place as the paralysis took hold.

Then he could see that the Trakenite was frozen, his hand on the clock dial, unable to move...which was good. The Master felt an eagerness, an anticipation that soon he would no longer be numb or in the excruciating pain within his decayed, rotted body.

#

Tremas felt himself frozen and stood immobile, unable to speak or call for help again. He wondered what would happen; the trap had caught him, but Tremas sensed an intelligence and a purpose.

Tremas continued to ponder, but then he heard a slight click and the creak as the door opened, swinging toward him. The fingers, black and brown, with black fingernails, chilled Tremas; whatever was coming forth was...a rotted, decayed husk.

The thing that emerged was a rotted corpse, a husk that wore a more tattered robe and cowl, and in the cowl, only the eyes seemed alive. The rest was the black and brown decayed form of some living dead, the teeth showing in the universal grin that was death.

The creature's eyes stared at Tremas, and then it rasped, "Finally, a new body at last..." and moved toward Tremas, who watched in a mix of terror and shock as the thing hobbled closer intently.

#

The Master stood and slowly limped, hobbled, in his pain-wracked body to the doors of his TARDIS, glancing at the monitor showing the Trakenite still frozen, trapped against his TARDIS.

The doors opened outward, and the Master exited his TARDIS. Stepping out, the Master hung onto the TARDIS door as it opened, using it to steady his decayed body. The Master stepped around the door and saw the Trakenite, his hand with the Consular ring against the face of the clock that was his TARDIS's current form.

#

The Master closed the TARDIS door but realised he had released his hand with too much force. His TARDIS, while massive, was shaped like a tall, narrow, longcase grandfather clock, so it wobbled, and the Master put his decayed brown and black hand against the edge to steady it.

Once the Master felt this TARDIS was now stable and would not fall over, he looked at the Trakenite. His body was that of an old man, about fifty to sixty Terran years, but young for a Gallifreyan.

#

The Master grimaced inwardly and realised a long-haired, bearded old man was not his first choice for a new body, a new vessel. This overly bearded old man could easily overpower the Master physically, without the paralysis field to stun and paralyse him.

The Trakenite, while an old man, had the strength to subdue and vanquish the Master in his decayed form. The old man could also easily flee, and the Master did not have the agility or ability to give chase...he would be plodding after the Trakenite.

#

The Master had the brief thought of letting the Trakenite bastard go, but he immediately rejected the idea.

This was the Master's one chance, one new body...and he had no choice now. The Trakenite was the consolation prize for the Master's grand scheme to renew himself, so it was now or never—and never meant dying in his rotted, decayed body in pain.

The Master took in the Trakenite; he was taller than himself but shorter than the Doctor had been. The Master noticed all the hair, the long hair, sideburns, jutting beard that seemed to have two tips, the moustache...all the facial hair of a man, in contrast with

the long flowing velvet gown that dragged along the floor in a feminine style.

#

The Master felt a rush of desire, eager anticipation as he approached the Trakenite. The Master could see Tremas's eyes follow him, wondering what he wanted, and the Master spoke of his desire.

"A new body...at last," the Master said with a deep rasp, eager for his new vessel.

The Trakenite was merely the current occupant of the body that would now be his, the Master's thirteenth regeneration.

The Master walked with a weak stride, the Trakenite watching but unable to do anything else. As he walked by the Trakenite, the Master felt a desire to touch and caress the body that would be his, but he put that out of his mind. He had gloated while the Doctor was paralysed, savouring the moment, but had relished it too long.

The Master came up behind the Trakenite, observing his long silvery-grey hair and the black and green velvet fabric from behind.

Trakenites wore long flowing gowns, reminiscent of Victorian-era fashion; except for the hands and face, the remainder of their bodies was covered in this expensive velvet fabric, forming a flowing gown.

But the Master focused, raised his arms, ready to claim his prize... slid into the Trakenite and then used his lingering powers as Keeper to merge and refresh the old Trakenite's body.

#

Tremas watched the rotting figure, whom he now knew as "The False Keeper," as the Trakenites called him. The Doctor had taken the time to explain that this creature, who had stolen the Keepership, was a mortal enemy of his kind, but had described his escape from the rotting fiend's time-ship... burning, and the rotted husk screaming in agony from the Source overload.

Now Tremas stood paralysed and trapped while the being eyed him with eager desire... still chanting, "a new body at last."

#

The Master was about to slide into Tremas, and Tremas could feel his faint breathing, smell the burnt, rotting flesh of the creature behind him, and sense the thing's eyes boring into him from behind.

"A new body at last..." the creature said, and Tremas could hear the rustle of his rotting robe and the decayed, desiccated cowl over his head...but then.

Nothing.

Tremas felt tense and anxious, his quirked eyebrow remaining raised, wondering what the thing was doing or wanting... Tremas

felt a twinge of impatience, wishing the rotting, decayed being known as The False Keeper would be done.

#

The Master stopped and held the power of the Source in check. He knew that once he started the process to merge and join with this Trakenite bastard, it was do or die... literally.

“No,” the Master said. “I shall enjoy this, but safely and surely...”

#

The Master came up beside Tremas, seeing the thick hair of his sideburns, and whispered...

"Let's get better acquainted with my new body... and not be hasty," the Master said, knowing the Trakenite could hear and sense him but do nothing.

The Master reached up and placed his rotting hand on Tremas's cuffed hand and then concentrated.

#

For an outsider, it would have seemed that the Master and Tremas disappeared, leaving only the long case grandfather clock... but the Master and Tremas were there, only inside the Master's TARDIS... the Master delighting in taking Tremas as his new vessel, a new body for his thirteenth regeneration.

#

The Doctor suddenly blinked and realised his mind, now in the brain and body of Tremas, was sharing events from both perspectives. At least the Master and poor Tremas had been separate beings.

Merging and joining with Tremas, the Master's mind dominated, yet Tremas was present; the Master's mind, thoughts, and senses fed into Tremas's mind. The Doctor realised that had Tremas been himself after the Master had abandoned him, for then Tremas would have surely been killed by the Master to prevent any knowledge or thoughts from being betrayed.

The Doctor shook his head, aware that as long as he remained within Tremas. While the Doctor's consciousness and presence governed Tremas's form, the powerful, vivid memories would persist.

With a sigh, the Doctor realised this would be the price for occupying Tremas's body, which had been the Master's for so long.

The Doctor knew that he would experience the actions, reactions, and senses as Tremas had, not as an observer, but as a first-hand participant in the Master's thoughts and actions...as revulsive and repugnant as they were.

The Doctor felt a strong pang of pity and regret. Tremas had been forced to watch and experience the sufferings of the Master's whims and mistakes, while powerless to do anything...imprisoned in his own body, the one the Master had stolen and commandeered.

Chapter 8 Answers

The Doctor sat up on the bed, realising he had disorganised Tremas's gown and loincloth. He grimaced and winced involuntarily; those memories would cross into his, the Doctor's, mind. Tremas's mind was like an echo chamber, and some of the memories reverberated into the Doctor's mind. The Doctor stood, almost forgetting his plan and intention.

#

The Doctor found a large reflecting mirror that was an advanced, alien technology that acted like a mirror, showing only a true reflection. And the multiple panes displayed front, side, above, below, and behind while staring directly at the mirror itself. The Doctor saw himself in the Master's suit, with the long tails and high collar adorned with oak leaves in some mock rank.

#

"Intergalactic butler," the Doctor said, "now to buttle off this monkey suit." He undressed himself, stripping all the clothing off his...Tremas's body. The Doctor found the process much easier once he stopped staring at himself in the multiple-view pane mirror.

#

The Master had created a suit using the fabric of Tremas's gown and had worn black shoes, of a Terran style. Underneath his suit, instead of Tremas's thin, gauzy loincloth, the Master had worn a

grey fabric thong. The two triangles covered his penis and scrotum, keeping them secure, and stretched between his buttocks, keeping the seam covered while his anus, though hair from the seam, black like wild pubic hair, peeked out from the thong.

#

The Doctor recognised a power cell and realised what the Master had done, and why he wore an undergarment that contained a power cell and a simple matter converter. The Master was using an undergarment designed for men, which was not surprising for Earth or the Terran future. The fabric absorbed any waste and transformed it into harmless substances like carbon dioxide.

The power cells were along the top of the triangles forming the pouch in the front and back, the triangles containing the matter converter. The elastic acted as a belt that held the small coin-sized power cells, which slowly drained to power the matter converter but also acted as a capacitor, charging from background radiation and electromagnetic fields, thus being nearly always charged.

#

The sophisticated thong was just in case of an "accident," should the Master get kicked in the crotch and leak urine from his bladder or punched in the abdomen and leak any excrement. The Doctor thought this confirmed his suspicions that the Master had kept the waste of Tremas as a reminder and a disgusting souvenir. The simplest thing to do was to empty both Tremas's bowels and

bladder, as Tremas had worn a simple, gauzy, cotton-like loincloth—a knot of fabric around his genitals and buttocks, not some sophisticated matter-converting underwear.

Instead, the Master had kept both and wore an advanced matter-transforming undergarment like a diaper amid the Master's evil manipulations and depredations.

Tremas's body had an "accident" that the Master could not stop. The Master was cautious but kept the remnants of Tremas's last drink and meal, carrying them with him, and like Tremas, something inside his "new" body.

The Doctor removed the thong, saw the matter converter pad where the two triangles met, but then, having meshed through the greyish fabric, the Doctor frowned and threw it onto the pile of the Master's bodily detritus, his other clothing mixed in a pile of fabric and garments. The grey thong landed in the middle, atop the centre of the clothing pile.

"Ah, my crowning achievement," the Doctor said aloud in an amused tone. The Doctor thought that if the Brigadier had punched the Master in his gut, the Master would have gone down on the floor, emptying his bowels and bladder.

Finally, the Master's clothing, his evil villain garb of the intergalactic butler suit, lay on the floor like a shed skin. The Doctor picked up all the striped clothing and tossed them aside in a defiant, rebuking gesture against the Master and his control over Tremas's body.

The Doctor turned and removed the hair clip from the ponytail, tossing it across the room. The long, dark hair unfolded, and the Doctor shook his head, throwing it back and then forward so that it hung about his, or Tremas's, cranium. Tremas had combed his hair over the top of his head, but the Doctor could brush and comb the long black hair momentarily.

The Doctor stared into the multi-pane mirror, examining his, or Tremas's, body. It had endured a rough service, and Tremas had watched as his body suffered. Shrunk, burned, punched, knocked out, tied up, and more—Tremas's body had endured all the Master's folly.

The Master had rejuvenated Tremas's body, changing it from the Terran age of a human male in his fifties to sixties, to thirty years in Terran years in less than a minute. The Doctor marvelled; the Master could not have known that Tremas's old man's body would survive the rejuvenation.

Tremas's body had become younger, but he had aged twenty to thirty years, even in reverse, and his body might not endure the shock. The Doctor smiled; the Master had been eager and yet desperate—taking a risk in Tremas's body that the Master had gambled on and won.

#

The body hair was black, covering all of Tremas's hair from his head to his pubic hair, and the hair between his buttocks and along his legs was all black. The chest had the "man boobs" of softened pectoral muscles and large nipples. A small amount of

paunch rested on the stomach; well, the Master had taken thirty or so years, in Terran terms, from Tremas's body, but he could not stop the physical signs of age, including body fat.

#

The Doctor rubbed his chest, touched the nipples and the stomach, and rubbed the skin, which was a pasty white, while thinking of all the brutality Tremas's body had sustained. The Doctor playfully moved Tremas's body, noticing the mushroom of Tremas's penis in the nest of black pubic hair, the scrotum sagging down, one testicle slightly higher than the other in the sack of wrinkled, dark purple skin.

#

Tremas had a slight paunch, with a round belly, and around his navel were some black hairs. Like a trail of ants, the hairs led down to the nest of black pubic hair. The small white bulge was likely hidden under Tremas's tightly fitting but long, flowing gown that he had worn on Traken, and the Master's intergalactic butler suit tightly concealed it beneath the black fabric and buttons that held it in place.

#

The Doctor frowned as he jiggled and shook the body, watching the flesh respond. The Master had been rough on Tremas's rejuvenated body, yet the Master seemed to show no marks or signs of damage. He had become more athletic, jumping around,

grabbing, and shoving, even after something brutal had happened to Tremas's body in an encounter with the Doctor.

Yet the paunchy, long-haired, bearded old man's body, simply the body of an older man, had allowed the Master to continue his trail of devastation across the universe and time.

#

The Doctor shook off his rumination and reflection, striding toward the bed and taking the loincloth.

He tied it around Tremas's crotch, over and through his buttocks. The Doctor then grabbed Tremas's long, flowing black-and-green gown and put on the short shoes, resembling slippers or boots, that were peeking out from under the gown. The rich fabric of Tremas's gown dragged along the floor. The Doctor slipped Tremas's Consular ring onto his right hand, moving around and getting used to the feel of the shoes and long, flowing gown that covered his—or Tremas's—body.

#

"Now the change is complete," the Doctor said aloud as he strode to the bathroom, the gown dragging along the floor. He found Tremas's gown light, the fabric soft, and his body felt free, with air circulating, and not the tight fabric of the Master's intergalactic butler suit.

The Doctor put down the brush, having first brushed, combed, and then brushed again. The long black hair of Tremas's body

was not styled as it used to be; the hair atop his head did not hang down the sides.

The Doctor made a few adjustments and was done. He had restored Tremas's body to the way it was before the Master had joined, slid into, and stolen Tremas's body, clothing, and waste.

Tremas had been shoved aside as the Master took control...and now, at least, the body resembled Tremas once more. The Doctor wondered, but knew Tremas would see this as some taunt or teasing, and would still want to destroy himself...and the Doctor in the process. The Doctor stood and decided to continue his search, exploring the rest of the Master's TARDIS for more answers.

#

The Doctor found one room puzzling; a large crate of wood stood in the middle of the room. The Doctor looked into the crate and found human, or Terran-style, clothing. The fabric was from Earth, and the clothes were of various kinds, mostly male, and from different periods in Earth's history.

The garments had been left unsorted, a pile of just musty clothes, and seemed an afterthought, carelessly thrown into the crate. The Master had simply discarded various clothes.

The Doctor wondered if they were from some disguise he wore...or something else? Somehow, the Doctor did not want to know, yet had to, so that he could find answers. The irony, the Doctor thought to himself, undoubtedly revolved around Tremas's body, the one the Doctor was now occupying...

#

The Doctor found another surprise in a nearby room...equipment from fifty-first-century Earth, or something similar. The technology was for organic distillation, the ability to drain the cellular energy from a living person, and then use it to rejuvenate cellular tissue at the DNA level.

The war criminal Magnus Greel had used this technology but had split open his cellular DNA in doing so, causing him deformities.

As Lelia had said, Greel, or "bent nose," was a bag holding water with a hole, and only by filling it with more water would the bag stay full...but would cause the hole to expand.

The Doctor pondered; the Master did not look deformed, and he was in a human body, a Trakenite, Tremas, now the Doctor's body. Yet the Master always seemed "fresh," without any physical damage in each encounter, despite, or at least Tremas's body being damaged and abused by the Master's mistakes or miscalculations.

It was a grim clue and gave a reason why the crate of discarded clothes...the victims had been "melted down" by the organic distillation process, and then once they were little more than dry dust, the Master had thrown out the clothing.

The Doctor winced at the thought, and from the amount of clothes discarded, the Master had consumed many victims...but not completely by organic distillation.

The Doctor realised that Tremas had to watch, see, and hear—experience firsthand, the victims used by the Master for his new body, that of Tremas.

The Doctor pondered, no wonder Tremas was insane, seeing the Master use others to restore his own body...and experiencing it fully. The Doctor, after looking at the equipment, left the room, looking for more answers, but not wanting to find more.

#

The Doctor almost stumbled into the room, and as he closed the door, he stopped. In the room was a large apparatus, almost like a secondary TARDIS control console.

Only in the centre was a glowing, glassy globe with a ring, almost like the Terran solar system planet of Saturn. The Doctor had a memory of Mawdryn's ship in an infinite elliptical orbit.

"Of course," the Doctor said aloud. "A metamorphic symbiosis regenerator...and the Master has one..." The Doctor shook his head in understanding and disgust.

Then, after some pacing, Tremas's long gown dragging along the floor, the Doctor comprehended the Master's scheme, and the answer to why the Master remained fresh, undamaged, and healed without eating, ingesting, digesting, or excreting.

The Master had combined the fifty-first Terran technology of organic distillation with the metamorphic symbiosis regenerator. His knowledge of Time Lord regeneration would have avoided the mistakes of Magnus Greel.

The Master was rejuvenated by splitting open the DNA of Tremas's cells of his tissues, systems, and then recombining them, over and over again.

The Doctor scowled, and the Master, with his knowledge as a Time Lord, could avoid the extreme reactions and consequences of both...the Master, though, could not continue the rejuvenation indefinitely. When Time Lords regenerated, they formed a new body, form. The Master was changing the DNA of Tremas, and then recombining the DNA into its original form, and rejuvenating.

"Clever, twisted, brilliant, and abhorrent," the Doctor thought, realising Tremas had to see, hear, and watch the Master rejuvenate the body and experience any pain in the process. Tremas was a lightning rod for all the extreme sensations and pain.

The Doctor stopped, as he realised the pile of clothing was the leftovers from the Master's victims. The Master would find younger human beings, probably males, and then by organic distillation extract the cellular energy, and then use it with the metamorphic symbiosis regenerator to rejuvenate his new form, the body of Tremas, back into its young, strong, fresh state.

The Doctor felt a shudder of disgust; he was in that body, and how many younger males had been killed, reduced to dust...so the Master could continue to be young and alive...in another man's body.

The Doctor realised he had no choice, and knowing did not change that. The Doctor also realised why the Master had wanted his body...then the Master could regenerate.

This rejuvenation system worked, but had limits and problems. No wonder the Master had kept this secret and did not make a point of it.

Although the Master could not hide it, he thought of how the Brigadier had sucker punched him, and when the Doctor saw him again, the Master was fresh, young. The lingering cellular energy also caused him to recover and rejuvenate from minor injuries.

"The paradox of Theseus's ship," the Doctor said, thinking of Terran, or Earth, Greek mythology. The Doctor circled the metamorphic symbiosis regenerator, examining the controls. The Doctor thought about going back into Terran history, and seeing if the legend and myth of Theseus was true...perhaps it was true.

The Doctor touched his...Tremas's body and thought a mordant thought...each rejuvenation on each cell in the tissues of skin, muscle, bone, blood, worked. But it was a geometric progression, one, two, four...so regenerating and rejuvenating a cell required twice as much cellular energy as before. Soon, the sheer number of cells and the number of rejuvenations would reach a biological limit. The Doctor frowned, thinking upon it.

The Master had probably reached the limit; the rejuvenation could continue, in theory, infinitely. But there simply were not enough human beings or living beings that the Master could use.

Even the entire population of Earth, at eight billion human beings, would be enough. So like Theseus's ship, the Master's new body, the stolen form of Tremas, was replacing each rotted board with another, but it required more and more energy.

Soon Tremas's body would become...the Master would have to eat, drink, defecate, urinate, to regenerate...and age, experience ageing, senescence, and eventually death.

The Doctor thought only Tremas would welcome that event, senescence and deterioration, and finally death.

The Doctor shook his head. The Master would do anything to guarantee his survival, and stealing, using, and abusing Tremas's body had only been part of the process. The Doctor smiled, yet the Master was predictable in that sense...his quest to become master of all matter and to continue his survival.

The Master was trapped in his desires and schemes; only the specific events changed. The Doctor left the room, having found the answers he wanted, and seeing the true evil of the Master...

"The quintessence of evil," the Doctor said, repeating words he spoke to the Castellan and Coordinator when the Master had been ready to destroy the Time Lords, Gallifrey...to continue his existence and survival.

Chapter 9 Returns

The Doctor sensed that the Master had returned, as he had expected. He thought that while the Master was in his body, the Master's mind was telepathically connected to this... his TARDIS.

The Doctor left the room with its secrets and then began to wander the corridors and hallways, with some familiarity, to return to the Master's TARDIS control room.

The Doctor frowned; Tremas's body felt... comfortable and pleasant, the long flowing gown providing a nice airy comfort, and the simple cotton-like fabric loincloth keeping his...Tremas's genitals are secure, but not tight or constrained.

However, the Doctor knew the Master would not have continued wearing Tremas's clothing; the Trakenite garb was not the Master's style, and he would purge anything exterior to Tremas, keeping it as a trophy or souvenir.

#

The Doctor's reverie was interrupted as he absent-mindedly blundered into the control room of the Master's TARDIS. The Master, in the Doctor's body, was leaning with both hands against the TARDIS console. The Master looked fearful, his skin white and clammy, appearing... ill. The Doctor frowned. The body was still his body, not the Master's body.

#

“Ah, you have many happy returns,” the Doctor said glibly, and the Master looked up and glared for a moment, realising the Doctor had trapped him. “What have you done... Doctor, to my new body? What have you done, you fool!” the Master gasped in a heated, accusatory tone.

“Oh, nothing,” the Doctor replied. “Just took a slow poison with tricophenyladehyde in a jelly baby when I arrived here.”

“You fool, you have tricked me,” the Master said. “So now I want my body back... and you can have yours.”

“Your body, it is Trakenite; my body, or the body of Tremas...”

The Master casually reached into a pocket and brought up his TCE, pointing it at the Doctor from across the TARDIS console. “You will, or I will kill you and the Trakenite...” the Master said wrathfully.

“So I guessed,” the Doctor said blithely, in a tone of obviousness and dismissal, “but if you kill me now, you’ll be stuck in my body... and will feign death with the neural inhibitor, then die from the poison.”

#

“Ironic,” the Master said, recognising the chemical he had used before on Gallifrey when he utilised the Eye of Harmony to partially regenerate his decayed, rotted form. Yet the Master had to feign death to get the technological implements... only now the

poison was not a neural inhibitor, but mixed in with something deadly.

“I thought you would appreciate the irony,” the Doctor said, gesticulating in Tremas’s gown, which the Master noticed.

“You’ve redressed in the Trakenite’s clothing, Doctor,” the Master said bluntly.

“Yes, more for Tremas, shedding your influence,” the Doctor explained. “And I know why you wanted my body—to reach the limit of rejuvenation?”

“I will have your body, Doctor,” the Master said, “the body I almost took on Traken. But now I want the Trakenite body back... or I will destroy you both, together.”

"How will you do that? Not using the console of your...this, TARDIS," the Doctor said. "You are in my Gallifreyan body; it is dying, and you are stuck with it, much like the Trakenites were briefly stuck with you as their Keeper."

The Master smiled, and the Doctor recognised his knowing smile and felt a sense of chill and discomfort...almost like seeing yourself smiling in a mirror when you are not smiling.

"The TARDIS of your form, the old Type Forty capsule, will suffice," the Master said. "I rematerialized from the vortex near my own, my former TARDIS...we will go there now, Doctor..."

The Master pushed away from the console and stood, gesturing with the TCE for the Doctor to leave. The Doctor did, again with his hands up, the long flowing gown of Tremas dragging behind him on the floor. The Doctor adjusted the long black hair, thick and luxuriant, but that of Tremas. The Doctor could feel or sense Tremas...watching and knowing his body might be home, the vessel, form of the Master. Tremas was aghast at that possibility, and the Doctor focused on remaining in the moment yet keeping Tremas’s mind in check.

The Master followed as the Doctor's body slowly numbed and felt rigid and cold as the tricophenyladehyde worked its poison. The Master realised he was giving up what he wanted most—a new body, that of the Doctor—but to escape the slowly dying form and let the Doctor destroy himself was the price.

The Doctor was still holding his hands up in a mock display of surrender, striding into his own Type Forty blue police box TARDIS. The Doctor turned after reaching one side of his TARDIS control console. Tremas's long flowing gown slid and skidded on the floor behind the Doctor. The Master followed and closed the TARDIS doors.

"Now then, Doctor," the Master said, "the same idea...we will switch bodies, and you will have your own, and I the Trakenite, as before."

"You won't be able to rejuvenate much more, if at all," the Doctor said. "You've reached the limit of the process, even with Time

Lord technology and Terran biotechnology from the fifty-first century."

"Perhaps, Doctor," the Master said, "but you will die just the same if I do not get back my previous body...and you can have yours...and whatever poison you took and injected...clever, but you forgot I could switch."

The Master gestured with the TCE, and the Doctor watched as the Master set the automatic control. The Master had set his TCE on a timer and could only deactivate it if successfully transferred into Tremas's body. The Doctor merely smiled wanly, and the Master glowered at him, and then they both put their hands on the TARDIS console.

#

"See you soon," the Doctor said in a wry, antic joke.

"Very soon," the Master stated, ignoring the Doctor's humour.

The Doctor closed his eyes, and after a few moments, the hum of the TARDIS control room, the touch and feel of the TARDIS console faded, and the Doctor found himself floating, formless as a mind, in the etheric link between his mind and that of the Master's.

The Doctor could sense Tremas's mind, weaker and grounded in his form, unable to transfer. The Doctor sensed he was moving, as if in a tunnel, and then was surrounded by darkness for some time.

#

The Doctor then perceived he was home, fitting into his form, in his own body. Opening his eyes, the Doctor grabbed the TCE, deactivated it, and then tossed it into the inside pocket of his greatcoat, making sure it was snug in the pocket. The TCE was a cold, metallic object, and the Doctor felt himself wobble, weak, but then felt the numbness, clammy feeling...back in his own body.

The Doctor stood for a while, feeling the poison, but then the antidotes as well...the Doctor had swallowed the antidote, and then the tricophenyladehyde with the poison.

The poison and tricophenylaldehyde had to spread throughout his body before it could be neutralised with the antidote. The Master had felt the poison and tricophenyladehyde and had felt the Doctor's body dying.

"If only he had waited," the Doctor said, feeling his body again, the poison and tricophenyladehyde went. The Doctor had faked his self-destruction as a trap, and the Master had panicked; if only he had waited, mused the Doctor inwardly, the deception would have been revealed. But the Doctor knew a weakness of the Master was his survival, at any cost or price.

Also in the panic of getting back into Tremas's body, the Master had not thought of another trap within the trap—fortunately for the Doctor, and now Tremas. The thought of Tremas the Doctor shifted his focus to the body that was face down on the TARDIS console, motionless and unconscious.

#

Tremas was face down, the transfer and stress on his mind and body more than enough to overload him. The Doctor walked to the other side of the TARDIS console and checked Tremas's body for a pulse. There was a steady beat, and the Doctor knew that it was Tremas alone in his body now. But the Doctor knew Tremas had been driven insane.

The Doctor, still shaking off the chemically induced dizziness and numbness, quickly went through the TARDIS control room door and found a storage room. Rummaging around, the Doctor found what he wanted...an electronic restraint, and a hand truck that had some electronic molecular straps. Putting the electronic restraint on the hand truck, the Doctor wheeled it to the TARDIS control room.

Tremas remained unconscious, his long black hair falling over his head and face, and he was lying at an angle in his long black gown with a green trim. The Doctor positioned the hand truck and the electronic restraint. The Doctor lowered Tremas backwards, carefully, and gently into the electronic restraint that he then attached to Tremas's wrists and ankles.

The Doctor had used a similar restraint on Professor Sorenson after he had been transformed into an "anti-man" infected with anti-matter. The Doctor mused that the restraint had only worked for a short time.

The Doctor knew that when Tremas regained consciousness, insane as he was, he would try to kill himself and have the

strength of a deranged, crazed maniac. The Doctor activated the controls on the restraint system and then lowered Tremas on the hand truck.

After strapping Tremas across his neck, chest, and legs, the Doctor activated the electro-molecular straps that hummed as they activated. Now the straps would have the strength of bands of steel, keeping Tremas secure.

The Doctor checked, and there was a crank mechanism so the hand truck could lift and tilt cargo as needed. The Doctor smiled, Tremas was safe and secure...soon to be free and himself, in his own body.

The Doctor brushed the long black hair back, revealing Tremas's face, although without the long beard, moustache, and sideburns. Those would grow back in time, and Tremas would be himself again.

The Doctor had a brief idea, an unexpected impulse, but a dark, renegade thought. He, the Doctor, could transfer into Tremas's body and put his own in some stasis or hyper-sleep. Then the Doctor could enjoy Tremas's body until it was time-worn, and then leave it for his own.

The Doctor stopped thinking, and his mind slammed down on those thoughts. To do that, even if nobody was the wiser, was at the same level as the Master's evil, and the Doctor knew it. Now that thought disgusted the Doctor.

The only person who would be in Tremas's body would be Tremas. The Doctor still had some admiration; Tremas and his body had been through some hard, rough times. The Doctor wheeled Tremas, still unconscious, into the first room from the TARDIS control room.

Tremas would be safe and not harmed, for now. What the Doctor planned was the next step—but first, Tremas had to awaken. The Doctor closed the door and admired Tremas's body, but realised it was not his to take or use.

That idea pushed out of his head, the Doctor walked around his TARDIS console and found the right panel underneath. Removing the panel revealed a space, and in the space was a large circular tank with green fluid in which an air stream bubbled and fizzed.

The green watery fluid bubbled, fizzed, and boiled, and inside the niche, a large black humanoid brain floated, preserved in the green fluid. It was the brain of Morbius, the renegade Time Lord, whom the Doctor had encountered on Karn with Sarah.

Chapter 10 Swapped

The Master felt his mind leave the Doctor's dying body and then floated formless in an etheric cloud. After some time, he sensed he was somewhere in a darkness, an empty void that was not even black to see.

The Master sensed he was in another body; another mind was around him, nearby yet distant. He realised his mind had landed in a body, but it was not his former one, that of the Trakenite.

Lacking senses but still conscious and thinking, the Master knew he had been tricked, duped by the Doctor, and now trapped. He was enraged and furious, but he was just a mind, alive and somewhere, but disconnected—no sight, sound, scent, touch, or taste.

The Master was now trapped, having swapped into some unknown place. He pondered all the things he would do in revenge, but realised all he could do now was wait. Where he was seemed timeless, the vast nothing going on infinitely. The forever now, the Master considered, timeless as infinity, and all he could do was wait. He knew the Doctor was behind this infinite limbo, the Master waiting in a non-existent waiting room.

#

The Doctor leaned under the TARDIS console of the Master's TARDIS. While the Master had made some changes to his TARDIS, the Doctor had his police box, a type forty space-time capsule. He found what he was searching for: the space-time

element, the main circuit that was the heart of the TARDIS console, and the console itself was the heart—or one of the many hearts—of the TARDIS. Like a Gallifreyan with two hearts, the TARDIS had multiple control rooms and consoles in the control room.

The Doctor examined the space-time element, knowing the Master might have set some booby trap or modified the recall circuit. The Master would not hold himself back from his evil, diabolical schemes and plans to become master of all matter in the universe, under the power of the High Council of the Time Lords.

Thus, the Master would not be recalled. While he kept the space-time element, the main circuit of his own TARDIS active, he would disable or deactivate the recall circuit. But in doing so, the Master would not want it tampered with, not after the Doctor and Joe Grant had gotten his dematerialisation circuit. He would not repeat a mistake, even in a previous regenerated form.

#

The Doctor checked the space-time element and found the Master had encapsulated the recall circuit in a micro-force field. He guessed, more guesstimated, that the Master had placed the recall circuit either ahead or behind in time.

The parlour trick would work, just as it did on Leela's planet Mordee, where a time field a few microseconds or femtoseconds ahead created an impervious barrier, literally a wall of time. So for the Master's micro-force field, it was a micro-bubble of time. The

Doctor pondered that the Master, despite his evil, diabolical, and ruthless nature, could be brilliant.

Should the Time Lords recall the Master's TARDIS, the recall circuit was in another time frame, even by an infinitesimal amount. Thus, the recall circuit never received the recall signal from Gallifrey. And if it did, it was outside the space-time dimension of the TARDIS console, so the recall circuit was never able to redirect the Master's TARDIS back to Gallifrey.

#

"Brilliant," the Doctor said aloud, and then he realised he needed only to deactivate the force field and have the recall circuit activate locally as if it had received the recall signal from the Time Lords on Gallifrey.

The Master's TARDIS would then travel to Gallifrey, much like when the Doctor returned after the outgoing president was assassinated by Goth, the then-decomposed Master's confederate; the Master's space-time capsule would be detected and anticipated.

And like the Terran sailing brig Mary Celeste, it would be found empty and abandoned. After some lengthy discussions by the High Council of Time Lords, they would realise or conclude the result.

#

The Doctor then adjusted the chameleon circuit and used information from his experience on Logopolis. The newly

rejuvenated and regenerated Master, now in the body of Tremas, had murdered several Logopolitan mathematicians and inserted false digits into the equation and its computation. The Doctor had been shrunk, miniaturised in his TARDIS.

Now, the Doctor thought of the irony: the Master had provided the necessary calculations to do the same with his own TARDIS, but without the Master. The miniature TARDIS he could easily transfer to his TARDIS and then send back as it was to the Time Lords on Gallifrey via the recall circuit.

The arrival of the empty, unoccupied TARDIS of the Master, as a secretly known criminal on Gallifrey, would cause a stir among the Time Lords, particularly the High Council, Lord President, Chancellor, and Castellan.

The Doctor smiled, and then the Time Lords would adjust the truth, as admitting the existence of the Master and that he was now vanquished was too much for the boring, staid Time Lord civilisation the Doctor had abandoned and fled.

#

"Only in mathematics will we find truth," said the Doctor, modifying the Master's space-time element to fit his plans.

As the Doctor worked, he thought of Borusa, recalling that during his time at the Academy, that was the first seed, the first crack, and later Lord President Borusa would seek immortality, becoming corrupted by his adjustment of the truth, ultimately wanting to alter it for his wishes and desires—not unlike the

Master; only on Gallifrey, proving, in a way, his statement. The Doctor finished his work and smiled—everything was ready.

"All set," said the Doctor. "Mate and check, bait and hook, ready."

#

The Doctor touched a control on the Master's TARDIS console and saw the indicator readout: the Master's TARDIS would transfer to the Doctor's TARDIS and rematerialize in miniature form. Then, while in the space-time vortex, the Master's miniaturised TARDIS would go into recall mode and return to Gallifrey.

The Doctor looked one last time at the control room of the Master's TARDIS and then sighed; it would return to Gallifrey and then be destroyed—most likely transduced to some location where it would be destroyed, or simply transduced but never materialised, lost as an unstable energy emission and surge in the vortex. The Doctor turned, opened the TARDIS doors, and left; what had been the Master's had briefly been his TARDIS.

#

The Doctor paused, held up his hand signalling a halt—stop to no one. The Doctor took the TCE from his inner pocket, where the Master, using his body, had kept it, and where the Doctor had placed it after the trick to swap bodies.

The Doctor examined it and then tossed it away with mock indifference. The TCE, the tissue-compression eliminator, a hallmark of the Master, clattered to the floor across from the

TARDIS console. The Doctor gave a slight shrug and left. Now what remained in the Master was the memories in Tremas's mind and body.

#

The Doctor carefully removed the large circular tank, seeing the green fluid move and slosh about, but the black humanoid brain was never uncovered from the green fluid that preserved it. The Doctor activated the antigrav plate, and the tank, green fluid, and black humanoid brain slid out from beneath the TARDIS console.

The Doctor removed some connections and complex heavy cables, taking the tank out completely. After placing the TARDIS console panel back in place, the Doctor raised the tank into his arms and then moved it. Opening the TARDIS doors, the Doctor pushed the tank out to where it would remain, the Null.

#

The Doctor had hollowed out a section of one of the great columns, and the tank fit neatly. The Doctor would reseal the niche; he had put several tools in the pockets of his greatcoat. There was some other technical apparatus connected to the tank.

The Doctor reconnected the mechanism so that the black brain of Morbius could now hear and speak. The Doctor smiled, wondering what his first words should be to his nemesis, now that the Master’s mind, essence, and soul were trapped in his new body—the brain of Morbius.

#

The Master hovered, floated, and lingered as a denizen in limbo, without any sense of time, until suddenly a familiar voice spoke aloud.

"Hello, hello?" said the Doctor, tapping on the audio device with a loud thump.

"Anyone at home?"

A loud clanging reverberated through the Master's mind, and he realised the Doctor was tapping or thumping against some wall.

The Doctor tapped the audio input, a crude microphone that Solon had wired into Morbius's brain, then tapped the side of the tank as if it were an aquarium.

The Master paused, wondering if he should respond. After a moment, he knew he had to answer, if only to get answers from his enemy.

"I hear you, Doctor, what have you done?" said the Master. "Oh, nothing much, just given you a new body as you requested..."

"This," the Master said with a sibilant hiss, "is not a new body; it is...nothingness, permanent nothingness...I cannot see, feel..."

"Well, this body, just a brain floating in a tank," the Doctor explained in a matter-of-fact tone, "does have some limitations."

"Brain? What brain?" the Master asked, his tone demanding. "A Time Lord brain, alive and preserved, so you have your...new vessel, a new form for your mind."

"This...is not a body," the Master said hotly. "This is a suspension in nothingness. I wanted the Trakenite's husk as my body."

The Doctor smiled as the Master responded, making Morbius's brain glow as his mind found the power to communicate. Morbius was likely in a state of shock, another mind inside his evil, rancid brain, overwhelmed for now.

The Master had anticipated this somewhat, but Morbius had not.

"Tremas's body is given back to him," the Doctor said. "The body is his body, the one you have used and abused in your evil quest and desire."

"Give me the body of the Trakenite; it is wasted on that long-haired, bearded old homosexual," the Master demanded.

"No, you have your new home," the Doctor said, making some adjustments to the apparatus controls.

"Doctor, I shall kill you for this..." the Master said.

"You shall die..." "Yes, yes," the Doctor responded.

"But you'll have a difficult time as simply a disembodied mind in an old Time Lord brain...soon your new roommate will manifest."

"Whose brain?" the Master asked petulantly.

"Oh, another evil renegade like yourself..." the Doctor began to explain, but at the Master's sudden realisation, he cut off the Doctor.

"Morbius," the Master said in shock. "That mindless butcher; you destroyed him..."

"Actually, no," the Doctor said. "The sisterhood on Karn destroyed a brain in a glass bubble brain case attached to a mongrel hybrid body."

"I captured the insane form of Morbius," the Doctor said. "I went back to that moment in time when I was stunned, dying, and lured that berserk hybrid to my TARDIS, where I stunned the raving form of Morbius and then removed the brain. After I put it back into the tank, Solon was dead, and Sarah was with me in the laboratory."

"And the Morbius hybrid?" the Master asked, intrigued by the Doctor's scheme.

#

"I created an android, using Oseidan technology," the Doctor said.

"So I released the android in the Morbius form, and they pushed it off the edge of the cliff. I then replaced the android with the Morbius hybrid body, with a fake brain in the brain case...so they burned and destroyed Morbius. The android, I simply had to return to my TARDIS."

"You are a hypocrite, Doctor," said the Master. "You transgressed the first law of time..."

"Technically yes, but I enabled the chameleon circuit, so my TARDIS blended in with the rocky terrain and high mountains of Karn," the Doctor said in explanation, as if a detective revealing the killer.

"I never stepped out of my TARDIS, only lured the Morbius hybrid, and sent the android form out and back again.

The android then dumped the Morbius hybrid body, which the sisterhood destroyed. So technically yes, my TARDIS was in two places, but I never interacted and did not change the overall sequence of events temporally. And I never stopped myself from the actions I took. So violating, transgressing the first law of time is an uncertainty."

"But you did, Doctor," the Master said. "When the high council learns of this..."

"Never mind, if they wanted to stop me, they could have recalled me via my TARDIS," the Doctor said. "So I think it's one of those technicalities the Time Lords will ignore this time."

The Doctor had the memory of the future when he would be recalled by the recall circuit in the space-time element of his TARDIS.

"How did you know?" the Master asked a vague question, but the Doctor knew the overall context and specifics of the question.

"Well, when Tremas's daughter, Nyssa, confronted you about murdering her father," the Doctor said, "You were evasive. Simply saying his body was useful."

"So you knew the Trakenite was still alive? My guest in my new body..."

"Yes," the Doctor said. "I said he was dead, and you in Tremas's body so Nyssa would not spend her lifetime trying to go after you, and rescue her father."

"How did you know?" the Master asked pointedly.

"Simple, I knew you would like to have some bargaining chip, a hostage, and Tremas became that. Also, you used Tremas as a lightning rod for all the agonising mistakes and brutality you had experienced when your plans failed miserably."

"The Trakenite was useful, Doctor," the Master said. "And I did not know the idiosyncrasies of his body...so I needed him alive for that knowledge."

"And to torment, and torture..." the Doctor said.

"Yes, I had to keep the Trakenite bastard at bay, Doctor. He was a constant distraction, the nagging, screaming voice, like a nagging thought or obsessive doubt."

The Doctor had a moment of realisation. The times when he overcame the Master, it was because the Master was distracted, unable to completely focus.

When the Master and the Doctor had battled over Kamelion, the Doctor had one. The Doctor pursed his lips. Tremas was helping him all along, in the only way he could, inside the mind of the Master, trapped inside his own body.

"I noticed you did not use your mind control or hypnosis," the Doctor said. "Keeping Tremas in check must have been difficult."

"Yes," the Master said. "That's why I want his body, you will give it to me."

"I will?" the Doctor asked. "No, Tremas's body is his own. I felt disgusted after you thought you had tricked me into it."

"You're a fool, Doctor..." the Master said.

"Yes, but the last thing, a clue as to this entire scenario was the words of Rassilon, in the tower in the Death Zone on Gallifrey."

"You were knocked out by the Brigadier's punch," the Doctor explained. "But, Rassilon sent you back, stating 'his sins will find their place in due time."

The Master did not respond, only brooded. The Doctor knew that had the Master been inside Tremas's body, had achieved immortality, both the Master and Tremas would have become stone figures in the panels of Rassilon's sarcophagus. By the Master's desire for immortality, then, Tremas would have been...forever trapped.

"The place where time is due is the Null, since there is no time here. One reason I will leave you here with Morbius. And since no

Time Lord comes here, you'll be in your world...or prison. But you'll get what you wanted, immortality."

"Doctor, do not do this," the Master said.

The Doctor could see the Master pleading on his knees when faced with the torment of Kronos. But thinking about Tremas, and his misery, now insanity, the Doctor was indifferent.

"You'll have company, your new body, and eternity to live..." the Doctor said.

"Give me my body!" the Master commanded and demanded.

"I thought about giving you another body, such as a Cyberman or Sontaran, but even those creatures still possess their own bodies."

"Would you like a new form, Doctor?" the Master said with a tone of beseeching favour, begging.

"Perhaps a Dalek, you in the slimy form of a Kaled mutant... but somehow that would make you more... dangerous. A Sontaran at least has an obvious weakness..."

The Doctor could only imagine the Master in the body of a Sontaran, complete with the probic vent, the opening and tube in the back of the Sontaran space armour at the base of the head, a large, squat body. Even if the Sontarans were clones created at a muster parade, they still possessed their own bodies.

"Please, Doctor, don't do this..." the Master said, but then another voice interrupted the Master's pleas.

The Doctor remembered the Master begging to escape Kronos, and then attempting to avoid being immolated in the gas stream on Sarn.

The Doctor had felt no pity, and the Numismaton gas had... well, Tremas had suffered the agony of the Master's suffering as Tremas's body burned in the Numismaton fire. The Doctor shook off the memory and still felt no pity for his evil nemesis.

"What... what is this, who dares to be here... in me?" came the voice of Morbius.

"Silence, you butcher, you are nothing compared to me, the Master of all matter," the Master responded, his mind now battling Morbius's to control the large, black brain floating in the tank.

"I am Morbius; I led the High Council of Time Lords," Morbius replied as if to rebut the Master.

The Doctor shook his head. The Master would be alive but trapped, all alone, and the Doctor was wary. But with Morbius constantly challenging and fighting the Master in his brain, the Master would be distracted. The Doctor smiled like two eternal scorpions vying for control of the stinger to try and destroy each other.

The voices had turned to gibberish as the brain glowed with the babble and cacophony of the Master and Morbius chattering at one another. The Doctor removed the control, and the din ceased,

although the brain glowed and flashed as the two evil minds of the Time Lords continued their bickering and blustering.

#

The Doctor pushed the tank into the column, double-checking that the apparatus was intact.

If Morbius or the Master did anything, or if anyone touched the tank, a small ring of explosives would destroy the tank and the black brain, killing both.

The Doctor had not mentioned it, not wanting to give either evil renegade Time Lord any advantage or foreknowledge.

But technically, the Master was now in the body of a Gallifreyan, albeit simply the brain, so he could leave the Null without Rassilon's fail-safe blanking the knowledge from his mind. Thus, the explosive booby-trap was set to ensure the Master and Morbius would never escape.

The Doctor finished, and the column was sealed, with the tank in the niche inside it. Nobody, at least no Time Lord, came to the Null; it was another Time Lord creation of Rassilon's, forever lost to their history. So the Master and Morbius would live on, trapped and timeless, forever in the Null. While the Doctor said nothing, the Null was a nullity point in the quantum stream; the Master could not use telepathy or any other Time Lord ability.

The Master, along with Morbius, would be trapped in a bubble of null space-time, unable to reach out or do anything except battle each other.

The Doctor admired his handiwork and put the tools back into his greatcoat. He had already resized the Master's TARDIS and then transported it into his own TARDIS. The Doctor planned to dump it into the space-time vortex, and it would automatically return to Gallifrey. The Doctor did not want to go home; he had other plans now, and there was Tremas.

Chapter 11 Release

The Doctor closed the TARDIS door and took off his greatcoat, collecting his scarf and hat and putting them on his hatstand. He pondered, feeling that enough time had passed.

The Doctor then heard the roar; the Master's TARDIS, still in the shape of a Greek column, had dematerialised, returning to Gallifrey, sans the owner. The Doctor winced, knowing that the two evil, renegade Time Lords, Morbius and the Master, were undoubtedly still fighting for control of Morbius's brain, which was now wanted and claimed by the Master. They would spend an infinite amount of time in the present at the Null, as neither could harm the other.

#

The Doctor thought deeply, remembering how the Master had taken Tremas's form, slid into his body, and stolen it, leaving Tremas like the waste in the bowel and urine in the bladder of his own body. Tremas, still alive inside his body, could not be harmed by the Master. He existed inside both his mind and his body; the Master was unable to do anything except use mental force to keep Tremas suppressed.

This required a considerable amount of mental energy and focus, explaining why the Master did not use his mental powers, such as hypnosis and telepathy.

It also clarified how the Master had faltered at times; Tremas had been fighting him all along, which allowed the Doctor to gain the

upper hand in a confrontation. The Doctor knew that poor Tremas had not only felt, experienced, and seen, but if the Master used him to endure the agonising things done to his new body, Tremas had felt it all. No wonder Tremas longed for death...

The thought of Tremas and death reminded the Doctor that Tremas would now be conscious, trying to find a way to kill himself and destroy all memories of his experience as the Master's new body. The Doctor had a plan; it was now time to implement the scheme.

#

The Doctor found Tremas awake, conscious, and struggling against the restraints he had bound him with. The squeaking and creaking noises indicated that Tremas's body, having been rejuvenated, was strong, and his madness to destroy himself gave him exceptional strength.

"Doctor, let me go," Tremas said, shaking his body, his long, flowing black and green gown moving as he flexed and stretched.

"No, Tremas," the Doctor replied. "I will release you soon enough, but for now... wait."

"Doctor, please," Tremas pleaded. "I just want to die. Kill me, with what I have seen done to myself and what has been done to my body... please..."

#

The Doctor looked at Tremas and could see his personality in his eyes, tinged with a hint of insanity after being the Master's vessel for so long. Ignoring Tremas's pleas to be released, the Doctor knew that if he did let him go, he would quickly try to destroy himself, and the Doctor did not want to fight Tremas to save him from himself.

The Doctor adjusted the hand truck, angling it, and then wheeled Tremas through the corridor to the TARDIS control room. The faint hum was welcoming to the Doctor, and Tremas continued to struggle, wiggling back and forth like a puppy in a new harness.

The Doctor positioned Tremas so he faced the view screen, and then, after making sure the hand truck would not move, set the brake and adjusted Tremas, so he was almost standing but looking at the closed view screen.

#

"Now then, Tremas of Traken," the Doctor said as he walked to the TARDIS console.

The Doctor found the control, and by pushing it, the view screen slid open, revealing the portal of the quantum time stream. At first, Tremas was so focused on freeing himself from the bonds that held him that he did not notice the quantum time stream.

Then Tremas sighed, rested, looked at the view screen, and then stared. Tremas's attention was held rapt, fascinated, and he fell into a hypnotic gaze into the quantum stream.

The lights and sparkling colours danced across Tremas's face and into his eyes, and Tremas became still, almost hypnotised by the lights and colours beyond in the quantum stream.

#

The Doctor waited, and when Tremas's head was still and his body motionless, the Doctor set the coordinates, and the TARDIS dematerialised, the console column undulating back and forth in a slow pumping rhythm.

As the TARDIS dematerialised and entered the space-time vortex, Tremas's head slumped forward, and he became unconscious.

"Rassilon's fail-safe," the Doctor said. "And Tremas's release..." The Doctor checked the coordinates, configured for the centre of the home universe and Terminus, which he had once visited or would visit in his travels. But for now...

#

The Doctor had taken Tremas back into one of his former companions' quarters, Adric's room. After releasing the restraints, the Doctor lowered Tremas's unconscious form, letting his body in the flowing gown fall gently onto Adric's bed.

The Doctor arranged Tremas's form, putting his arms across his chest, legs out, head back—Tremas in the pose of gentle repose. Yet Tremas was not dead; he was unconscious, the shock of Rassilon's safeguard overloading his brain and mind.

#

The Doctor had kept and would keep Adric's cabin and quarters as Adric had left them, and the Doctor would let Tremas rest and revive in Adric's quarters. Somehow it seemed fitting: Adric, a brilliant if erratic mathematician and scientist, much as Tremas was a scientist and scholar on Traken. Adjusting Tremas's body so he was lying on his back, arms at his side, feet apart, the Doctor did not want Tremas to roll or be face down, but to wake up on a bed. Tremas would not be Tremas; he would be free, released by Rassilon's fail-safe.

#

The Doctor looked at Tremas's unconscious, prostrate form, his body inert and at peace. The Doctor felt a twinge of pity. Tremas had been ill-used, his body abused by the Master in his schemes and plans. The Master had taken the body of a kind, gentle old man and turned Tremas into a monster that had killed and destroyed. Tremas had to witness his body being abused, damaged, and suffering, experiencing the sensations firsthand.

#

The Doctor sighed; the Master was gone now, as was his memory from Tremas's mind. Nothing more of the Master existed, although the Doctor knew some of the Master's essence was still present in Tremas's body. It was tissue that the Master had used to rejuvenate Tremas's body somewhat.

Now the Master was gone, although his rejuvenation and restoration of Tremas's body to a younger form remained. Yet

even unconscious, the Doctor saw Tremas, gentle and kind, even with the Master's goatee.

Tremas was restored, his body and mind free of the Master's evil influence; the memories of the Master's depredations were gone, and Tremas's mind was a blank and empty vessel.

#

The Doctor checked the console, and the TARDIS console column continued to rise and fall as the Doctor's TARDIS travelled to the coordinates at the centre of the universe. The Doctor pondered that Rassilon's fail-safe was for non-Gallifreyan humanoids.

Rassilon knew some Time Lords, like the Doctor and the Master, might have companions who travelled in time and space, even learning to operate the TARDIS controls. As a safeguard, Rassilon had the quantum time stream imprint in the minds of those who gazed into it—a fail-safe.

Glancing into the quantum stream would reveal all possibilities, but only a Gallifreyan would retain the knowledge. The lights and colours of the quantum stream had a subtle effect on a non-Gallifreyan mind, causing a total blanking of all memory, total amnesia.

To acquire all the knowledge of oneself across the multiverse was knowledge not to keep unless one was a Gallifreyan. There was a trap in the prize of the ultimate knowledge, of past, present, and future across all infinite universes: the multiverse.

Rassilon did not want a companion like Sarah, stowaways like Adric, or even a mechanism like K-9 to bring the TARDIS to the quantum Null and then obtain the ultimate knowledge. Thus, a non-Gallifreyan brain neuron would be conditioned to forget forever by the lights and colours experienced through the eyes and sounds of the quantum stream. Tremas's mind was now a blank slate, complete and total, with permanent amnesia of all he was and had experienced.

Tremas would awaken a younger man biologically but unaware of all that had transpired—the Master stealing and using his body for evil, conniving schemes, and all the suffering Tremas had undergone due to the Master's folly.

The only release for Tremas was to forget everything. The Doctor checked the coordinates, ensuring he did not arrive before he would be at Terminus, but a year and a day after, long after he would depart, leaving Nyssa to help those diseased denizens, the Lazars, cure their pox, a leprosy-like disease.

Nyssa had decided to remain to assist those condemned to the Terminus space station. The Doctor estimated that Tremas would awaken after the TARDIS arrived, and then... well, Tremas would be with his daughter, safe.

While Tremas's body was free of the evil, diabolical mind of the Master, on some planets, places where Tremas would be in great danger, the Master's plans and schemes had backfired and caused endless suffering for others.

Tremas could get trapped, and then most likely killed, as those who had suffered would see Tremas's body as the Master's form, and Tremas would suffer for the Master's schemes.

Chapter 12 Reunion

The Doctor watched the TARDIS console column continue to rise and fall, almost hypnotised, mesmerised...lost in thought. He would have to explain the lie he had told Nyssa about Tremas when she thought the Master, using Tremas's body, had impersonated her father. The Doctor quickly said the Master had killed Tremas and stolen his then-empty husk.

#

The truth would have led Nyssa to pursue the Master in a vain quest to save her father, Tremas, but the Doctor knew she would have no chance. She would have her father's body, that of Tremas, but it would be a form used by the Master. The Master would kill Nyssa rather than risk his new body in the stolen husk of Tremas, a form of Tremas. No, the Doctor had lied to prevent that, but now he would have to explain his deception to Nyssa.

#

The Doctor looked and saw that the TARDIS console column had stopped its undulating rhythm. The TARDIS had materialised and landed from the space-time vortex in a corridor on the Terminus space station. The Doctor activated the view screen, and to his brief shock and surprise, saw Nyssa with some others standing and waiting. He had arrived at the right space-time coordinates, about a year and a day after his previous visit in his next regeneration.

While the time coordinates were indeed more than a Terran year and day in the future, under Nyssa's influence, the Terminus space station now looked more like a hospital than a terminal ward. The lighting was brighter, and several Lazars walked around looking healthier and more alive than living corpses packed into a room.

#

Nyssa stood expectantly, with the Gorm, a large dog-like creature, near her, wearing some badge or insignia on his outfit. The Gorm looked alive, and the Doctor recalled how he had freed it from the control of the "box" that summoned it.

Two Vanir flanked Nyssa, seeming to be in better health and shape. Nyssa had broken the control of the Terminus Corporation by creating and synthesising hydromel for the Vanir, ending their dependence on the Corporation.

Terminus had become a legitimate hospital, no longer a dumping ground for the Lazars to be corralled and left to die. Nyssa stood waiting...almost as if she knew why the Doctor had returned.

#

The Doctor closed the view screen and went out of the TARDIS control room to Adric's quarters. Tremas was still unconscious, sleeping now, but not yet awake.

The Doctor decided to let Tremas sleep while he explained things to Nyssa. Hopefully, her happiness and joy at having her father would overcome her anger at the Doctor's deception about

Tremas. The Doctor wondered but could not decide which would be the case...for now.

The Doctor emerged from the blue police box, the TARDIS, in his previous regenerative form when he met Nyssa on Traken. She showed a brief look of surprise; she recognised the Doctor, but not as she had last seen him.

The Doctor found the air somewhat sterile; the Terminus space station was a leper colony, and the floor clanked like the metallic grating of an industrial power factory, now transformed into a hospital.

#

"Doctor," Nyssa said, walking up to him and hugging him. "You're back...to check on my work, my progress?"

"Hello, Nyssa," the Doctor said, unsure of what to say, "I’m happy to see you again and glad you're still working...helping the patients and guards."

"Yes, Doctor, we have found a way to synthesise the hydromel..." Nyssa began to explain, but the Doctor indicated he wanted to speak alone.

Nyssa led the Doctor to one side, and they walked. The others had departed, and Nyssa gestured, dismissing them as an authority figure respected here.

"What is it, Doctor?" Nyssa asked directly.

"I'm not sure where to begin," the Doctor said, "but let me try... First, I must admit to a lie, a deception regarding you..."

"Oh?" Nyssa asked, and they both stopped walking.

"Yes," the Doctor said, "a lie about... Tremas... your father..."

#

"So my father was still... alive," Nyssa said, understanding the Doctor's deception, having heard what transpired and why he had lied to her. Nyssa acknowledged and accepted that the Doctor did not want her to pursue the Master, trying to save her father.

Now that Tremas was free, Nyssa understood and forgave the Doctor's deceit, happy to know her father was free and himself. Nyssa would explain, teach, and share all that Tremas was, all he had been.

"He was alive, Nyssa," the Doctor said. "And he fought the Master from within; one reason the Master could not use his mental powers or even hypnosis was that your father...Tremas was like a soldier in a prison camp, making the captors expend so much effort that it weakened them against the Master in the war. Tremas was fighting to help me against the Master all along."

"I'm glad," Nyssa said. "And I understand your reasons for the deception, but now... that doesn't matter; I'm just glad my father is free of the Master."

"Free and ready to create a new life with you," the Doctor said. "Although he will be younger, still influenced physically by the

Master, you'll have plenty of time to get to know each other, and you can tell him who Tremas is."

"Time well spent," Doctor. "Although I shall never tell my father what he used his body for... all the Master's evil schemes and diabolical actions."

"Yes, Tremas is now free, but to learn of what he was... well, his freedom is like a cure, a cure based on his forgetting."

"That is all now past, Doctor..." Nyssa said firmly.

#

Tremas blinked, sat up, and looked around. A pleasant, soft hum filled the air, and he was in someone's room, with bright light, various objects, a chair, a desk, books, and the bed upon which he lay. The various objects belonged to someone but had long been unused.

A long black and green gown covered his body, and he saw a young woman, strangely familiar, and a tall man with curly brown hair standing next to her. The young woman smiled at him and approached him... with the gait of welcome and reunion.

"Father," she said to him.

"Father?" Tremas asked in a bleary, sleepy voice. "Who are you?"

"I am Nyssa, your daughter... and I've waited a long time to see you again, Father."

Tremas sat up, feeling dazed and weak, as if he had woken from a long slumber without recalling any dreams. Tremas rubbed his face, ran his hand through his long black hair, and realised he could not remember... anything.

"Who am I then?" asked Tremas, looking at the Doctor.

"You are Tremas, this is your daughter, Nyssa, and I am the Doctor. You are a lucky man, Tremas..."

Nyssa walked to Tremas and hugged him as he sat on the edge of Adric's bed. The Doctor smiled and quietly left Adric's quarters, letting Nyssa reconnect with her father, Tremas.

#

The Doctor returned to the TARDIS control room, checking the coordinates for space and time, and pondering. Tremas would be safe with Nyssa, and the Doctor had not gone into great detail about how he had freed Tremas or where he had left the Master.

Nyssa did not need all the details of her father's suffering and experiences at the hands of the Master. Nor all the Master's evil schemes and actions, the ways he had used Tremas's body and form. Knowledge of the Master's wicked plots, schemes, and diabolical nature would remain forgotten.

#

After some time, Nyssa, holding her father's hand, walked into the TARDIS control room with Tremas, who wore the smile of a father. The Doctor had been pacing and stopped when he saw the two Trakenites. The Doctor smiled at Nyssa and Tremas.

"My father will stay with me, Doctor," Nyssa said. "He will assist me in my work here at Terminus. I'm still refining the treatment."

"I have much to learn, Doctor," Tremas said, the Doctor seeing Tremas was himself, "and to help my daughter, catch up on the time we missed."

#

"I was wrong, Tremas... and Nyssa. Your luck had not run out," the Doctor said, thinking of his last words to Tremas on Traken. Nyssa was puzzled, but the Doctor gave her a wink of confident reassurance, and Nyssa smiled.

Tremas frowned briefly but then smiled, sensing some glib but kind remark or epigram from the Doctor. His memory was gone, yet Tremas felt a positive jest rather than a negative rebuke... from this Doctor.

"Would you like to see things? Join us here for a time?" Nyssa asked as the Doctor opened the TARDIS doors.

"No, that's most kind, Nyssa," the Doctor said. "But I must be going now..."

Nyssa looked at the Doctor, his words implying some urgency, but his voice was that of a friend leaving a father and daughter to catch up without his presence.

"Farewell, Doctor," Nyssa said, shaking the Doctor's hand and then giving a brief, tight hug. Tremas shook the Doctor's hand warmly and firmly.

"Thank you, Doctor," Tremas said. "I don't know who I am, but I am glad to be with my daughter."

"Take care, good luck," the Doctor said. "Time to be going."

Nyssa and Tremas walked out of the TARDIS control room, and the Doctor closed the doors.

The Doctor set the space-time coordinates, but then saw them change as if the recall circuit had intentionally selected where to go. The Doctor recognised the coordinates.

#

The TARDIS console column began its up-and-down movement, and the TARDIS dematerialised into the space-time vortex.

"The Death Zone, Rassilon's tower... on Gallifrey," the Doctor said. "I have been summoned for an audience with Rassilon."

The Doctor thought of the irony, yet the sense it made in his current regenerative form; he had not been in the Death Zone with his other selves.

The Doctor had been trapped; the time scoop had been unable to take him to the Death Zone, Rassilon's tower... or, more importantly, his tomb. A slight sense of fear crept up the Doctor's spine, along his back—a dread of going there. The experience was known to him, but through his previous incarnations and the quantum stream of the Null. Yet going to the tomb of Rassilon in the Death Zone was unsettling.

Still, the Doctor knew there would be some... confrontation. After all, he knew Rassilon had guided him. Now for the denouement, the revelations of Rassilon.

The culmination, and the Doctor had to admit to himself he wanted this information—to understand and to know now that Tremas was free and the Master had received his reward of a new body, immortality, and eternal banishment with the other evil, diabolical Time Lord, Morbius.

The Doctor understood most of what had transpired for that, but there were a few things, some loose ends, questions he wanted answered... and only Rassilon himself could provide those answers... or at least the mind of Rassilon.

Chapter 13 Request

The Doctor put on his greatcoat, hat, and scarf once the TARDIS had materialised with a loud, ominous thud. He had used the view screen and saw that, thankfully, he was in the tower of Rassilon, in Rassilon's very tomb. Closing the view screen, the Doctor wound the scarf knitted by Madame Nostradamus around his tall form and adjusted his brown felt hat, then his greatcoat.

#

The Doctor felt a cold sweat, and preparing himself in a mock formal dress before some archon or emperor had not helped as he had hoped. Rassilon was the founder of the Time Lord society, Gallifrey, and time travel, yet was wily, mercurial, and had influence long past his own time. Shaking off his doubts, the Doctor opened the TARDIS doors and exited. The two blue doors clicked shut behind him, and he took in what his previous forms had seen, but it was just an outlier memory.

#

The Doctor had been trapped, and Borusa's use of the time scoop had been edgy at best. He had never come in this regeneration to the tower in the Death Zone, to Rassilon's tomb. The Doctor had never visited the most forbidden and distant place on Gallifrey.

#

The tomb of Rassilon was just as he remembered, cold, almost like a castle, and a drafty wreck of a castle. The body of Rassilon

lay upon the funeral berth, a large rectangular sarcophagus, arms crossed, his ring visible on his hand. The panels along the sides of the sarcophagus bore the outlines of those who were immortal, now statues forever. Rassilon had given them immortality, just as the Doctor had given to the Master and then Morbius.

The Doctor marvelled at Rassilon's body, attired in his Time Lord gown, clothing, and headpiece, his form forever immutable in the long repose of death.

Yet he had known Rassilon's mind from the Matrix, where Rassilon's thought patterns continued to exist. Rassilon's mind was preserved here, in the tower of Rassilon, in the now-abandoned Death Zone on Gallifrey.

"I am here, Rassilon. You summoned me, and I have come. Don't keep me waiting," the Doctor said with an impatient, if pedantic, tone. "We have some things to discuss, resolve…important matters."

#

He thought he would be waiting for some time, but then, there was a gust of cool, almost cold air, and above Rassilon's body, the image of Rassilon appeared.

#

"Be careful, Doctor," the image of Rassilon intoned, "be very careful. I have given you the freedom to travel, to journey in time and space, but that is at my sufferance."

"Oh yes, of course," the Doctor replied. "I only wanted…"

"I know what you want, Doctor. Something few come to me for: an explanation, edification. Not the chance or opportunity for immortality."

"No, Rassilon, great lord president, I do not seek immortality as my teacher and mentor, Borusa, did…once. I seek your wisdom so I may…understand, my enlightenment."

"Very well, Doctor, I shall share what I can so you are in the light of knowledge."

"Yes," the Doctor said in an affirmative tone.

An elegant chair appeared, and the Doctor felt himself nudged into sitting.

"Then sit, Doctor, and I shall explain and provide you with answers to the questions that consume your thoughts and dominate your mind."

#

The Doctor snorted slightly at Rassilon's grandiloquent statement but avoided rolling his eyes in defiance.

"Thank you," the Doctor said quickly, waiting for Rassilon to explain. The Doctor knew he was the supplicant to Rassilon, who had answers.

"You have completed one of the tasks I set for you," Rassilon said. "I am pleased that the unfortunate victim of the evil renegade's

schemes has been released. The last time you were here... I gave a short insight, a clue into that time and moment for you."

"Yes," the Doctor acknowledged, "you said 'sins will catch up in due time,' and where else is due time except the Null?"

"Indeed, Doctor. Having touched my mind in the Matrix before, I knew you would understand in due time," Rassilon said, the Doctor wondering if Rassilon was making a pun or quip, but deciding not to comment on it.

"I had wondered," the Doctor said. "But why did you want Tremas freed?"

"Simple, Doctor. I could not save the evil, rebel, renegade Time Lord who was your nemesis and enemy, killed and destroyed. But the one trapped in his flesh, the body the renegade took, was... an innocent trapped. So I gave you the clue and then the insight to free that one from the diabolical Time Lord."

"I see. It just seems so... convoluted."

"Perhaps, Doctor... but all things must happen as they must, so that what must be, must be in time and space. I knew the evil one's desire for ultimate knowledge would be the one place he could always be found."

"And then you directed my TARDIS, via the recall circuit in the space-time element, to take me there when the timing...when the moment was right."

"Indeed so, Doctor, and you succeeded as I knew you would."

"And my violating the first law of time?" the Doctor asked, wanting to be very sure on that point.

"You did not interact with your previous self in that time zone, place, and as the Time Lords themselves had guided you there... and events unfolded as they had before.

Much like in your travels that sometimes technically were a violation of the laws of time, it was overlooked as your freedom permitted it, and ultimately it worked to maintain the universe as it had been and will be."

"I see, I'm glad... what if the Master had put on your ring and demanded immortality then?"

"I would have refused it, as the evil one would have been imprisoned, along with the poor, unfortunate, innocent you have released, Doctor. But in that aspect, things unfolded as they needed, with the help of your companions."

#

The Doctor thought the Brigadier had punched the Master, and then the Master had been tied up in tapestries, unable to do anything until Rassilon sent him into the space-time vortex with his insight, a passing clue about when the Master's fate would come.

"You said," the Doctor stated, "that 'His sins will find their punishment in due time.' I later understood that due time was the quantum stream Null."

Rassilon smiled.

"Yes, and they have Doctor...and you, as the only Doctor not here then at that time, would know from your previous selves, and be the one to have the punishment. As it was meant to be."

"And now..." the Doctor said in a half-question.

"And now, Doctor, as you once said to the Eternals, you have your choice as enlightenment."

"What do you mean?" the Doctor asked.

"The enlightenment of the choice to remember, or to forget...as you once have before."

The Doctor realised Rassilon's wisdom, and possibly his nature, would be for the Doctor to forget everything. Borusa, now a stone edifice on Rassilon's sarcophagus, had told him some...of when the Sontarans wanted to control time and invade Gallifrey.

Yet the Doctor only remembered being in the Panopticon, the great key on the floor, and all alone. The dematerialisation gun that could wipe matter from all time and space in the universe was gone, as was the Sontaran, Stor, who had wanted to destroy Gallifrey and the Time Lords. The Doctor had forgotten even being president of the High Council.

"I will return you to the time when you did not come here, to me, Doctor," said Rassilon, "and you will forget doing these things until you do them."

The Doctor felt a mix of relief and then frustration. Even the Time Lords had difficulty with things they did in time and space, and then would do...it was frustrating repeating oneself ad infinitum—worse without knowing.

Yet the Doctor knew Rassilon was right. If the Doctor returned to the point in time of his current regeneration with the knowledge that could be dangerous, as the Master and Morbius would not be lost to time as much as Time Lord history from Rassilon was, but knowledge of the existence, and that they were not lost, could lead to other renegades and problems.

"I understand, and thank you, great lord president," the Doctor said respectfully, giving a mock acknowledgement and salute to Rassilon, who smiled and nodded. The Doctor felt his mind...floating, losing focus.

#

The mind of Rassilon watched the Doctor leave the tomb in the tower in the Death Zone. The mind of Rassilon knew it was the mind—the thoughts, experience, knowledge, the wisdom of Rassilon, yet still finite. The mind knew that it had the lifetime and memories of Rassilon, but was not the great Time Lord, Rassilon.

The Doctor had been known to Rassilon, and in his foreknowledge from the quantum stream Null, had waited for events to occur, and then influenced them to unfold, as they had been seen, had done, and now would with Rassilon's mind knowing.

The Doctor had been the random element, and in the Doctor's travels, the Time Lords balanced events and kept things balanced across the space-time continuum. Yet the Doctor, while suspecting his freedom had this price, the Doctor did not know for certain.

Rassilon's mind smiled or had that memory of a smile, and knew the Doctor would continue, and things would be balanced throughout for all of the multiverse to be balanced for evil and good, light and darkness.

#

Nyssa checked the settings and measured the radiation that was used for the cure of the Lazars, and had cured her. The accuracy of the device was increasing, and the amount of radiation sickness from the treatment had lessened.

Smiling, Nyssa saw her father, Tremas, reading a technical book on a computer screen. His mind had been blanked, including all knowledge, but Tremas still had the technical skills.

With the Doctor's help, Nyssa had set up an information core on Terminus, and Tremas had been reading, learning, and his gifts as a scientist had shown. Nyssa knew that together she and her father would perfect the treatment to a point that the Lazars would never be disease-ridden again.

#

The thought of a disease reminded her of what Tremas had endured...the Master. Nyssa frowned and adjusted the controls

slightly to improve the accuracy and precision of the settings. Her father, the Doctor, had warned that he suffered from the Master, who had kept Tremas alive solely for knowledge of his health and medical condition.

Nyssa had agreed and accepted this, and the Doctor had cautioned her not to speak of what had happened to Traken or its destruction. The Doctor encouraged Nyssa to have amnesia and to be vague and general about questions. The important thing, he had stressed, was to spend their time together getting to know each other and not reflect on the past.

That had been the cure, Nyssa thought; the Doctor had completely erased all memory of the Master from Tremas. Tremas was free from the Master's evil influence and was now a free man.

Free from the Master, while Tremas's body still bore black hair, the growth of a beard, moustache, and sideburns had altered his appearance. Nyssa briefly thought of that evil creature inside her father, now gone.

Now, after some time since the Doctor had brought her father back to her, alive but amnesiac, Nyssa was in a state of joy. Both she and her father were the last of Traken, survivors of the Master's evil depredations. Now her father assisted Nyssa with her work on the cure for the Lazars, synthesising hydromel, and transforming Terminus into a proper hospital.

#

Tremas looked at Nyssa and smiled. He did not know her as his daughter, but at that moment, he found Nyssa to be vaguely familiar. They both lacked memories. They were prisoners of forced ignorance, yet Tremas smiled; they had each other. Tremas was the father, yet he was the pupil; Nyssa, his daughter, was also a teacher. They would learn much from each other in time...

#

The Doctor stood in his TARDIS control room, wondering. He had a vague notion of missing something, something forgotten, as he found himself staring at the inactive recall circuit.

The Doctor pondered...he had not removed the space-time element for some reason, as the recall circuit had been by Rassilon's design and intention; but then dismissed the entire idea and train of thought. For now, he would leave the space-time element as it was; Rassilon would not be outwitted if the Doctor was called, summoned for some purpose again.

The Doctor smiled, for he was heading for Earth, Terra, his favourite planet—or had the TARDIS landed on Earth? He shook off his confusion and indecision and opened the TARDIS view screen to see where he was and where his next adventure lay ahead of him in time and space.

# # #

Epilogue

The Master brooded in his new body, a decayed Gallifreyan brain floating preserved in a tank. How many moments, centuries, or millennia had passed… this was unknown. The Master was still in the Null, in the forever now, in his prison with only the other evil renegade Time Lord, Morbius, as company and rival in Morbius's rotted brain.

The Master pondered his defeat and imprisonment by the Doctor's trickery. He had been a fool; his hubris was his undoing, and his need to survive was his unmaking. He had jumped and landed in the brain of Morbius, who was a slovenly butcher compared to him. Now the Master had withdrawn and ceased his struggle with the mind of Morbius.

The more the Master fought with Morbius in their mental tug-of-war, the more he felt defeated… so finally, the Master simply withdrew; the only active thing was to become passive… and wait, consider, ponder, and brood… perhaps for eternity.

The Master considered that when he had the Trakenite's human body and was in his human brain, he had suppressed the Trakenite bastard.

If the Trakenite's mind had been active in his brain, along with the Master's mind, they would have engaged in a never-ending conflict, a duel within the confines of the Trakenite's human brain. While the Master had rejuvenated the Trakenite's body and his brain too, the constant activity of two minds in the same brain

would have gradually degraded and eroded under the weight of the mental activity.

Now the Master was in a similar situation; although he was in the brain of a Time Lord, he wondered if the weight of his mind and that of Morbius would be too much. The brain of Morbius had been taken from his body and had never been regenerated or even rejuvenated. Even within the liquids and fluids that chemically preserve the brain and the life support system sustaining it, the neural activity of both minds would wear down the neurons.

The Doctor had been both insufferably compassionate and exceedingly cruel. Compassionate in that the Doctor had not killed the Master, forcing him to face oblivion… something the Master had done much to avoid. Cruel in that the Master was trapped, alive, aware, and knowing he was both while being powerless to do anything except exist, continuing eternally.

The Master suspected, no one had expected that the Doctor had left some booby-trap, should anyone else reach the quantum null and had left him with Morbius in the Null, rivals fighting for control of the preserved brain.

So the Master could only wait, outlast his current nemesis, Morbius, and gain an advantage in the struggle to control Morbius's preserved brain. He would wait until he could find the one thing that both the Doctor and he had overlooked. The Master knew there was something… just not what, yet. That thought gave

him a small jot of hope and a sense of purpose… now to find that one thing. Then the Master would seek his vengeance…

Afterword

This story arc about Tremas's fate was never explained or explored in the official Doctor Who television series. The Doctor was saying that Tremas was dead on Logopolis to Nyssa, but the Master never answered, only stating that Tremas's body was useful.

The Master evaded a direct answer, as if he was avoiding any mention of Tremas alive inside him. The Doctor made the statement, but simply "Tremas is dead..." and then "murdered by him, the Master."

The Doctor's quick statement about Tremas reminds me of the American movie "Star Wars" where Obi-Wan Kenobi tells Luke that his father was betrayed and murdered by Darth Vader...and later that it was true from a certain point of view.

From the episode script:

> NYSSA: Father!
>
> DOCTOR: That's not your father. Tremas is dead, murdered by him, the Master.
>
> MASTER: Nyssa.
>
> NYSSA: You killed my father?
>
> MASTER: But his body remains useful. Without it I could not have conquered Logopolis.

So, no affirmation and no denial, an evasion by not answering the question. This Doctor Who fan fiction novella was to provide that story arc and use elements of the Doctor Who series from previous episodes.

Kassia

The character of Kassia, Tremas's second wife, is like the main character, only not the main character, but driving the events and conflict in the story. Her goal was to "save" Tremas from becoming Keeper, yet Kassia seemed more interested in her own desire for power.

Tremas married her (if Tremas was homosexual, it was to hide his same-sex proclivities), but there seemed to be little love and affection; Kassia married Tremas, but for her own purpose: power. In her conversations and interactions, she is a power-hungry bitch who wants to become Keeper.

In the end, if her goal was to save Tremas, Kassia was destroyed by the Master as Melkur to become Keeper, and Tremas was later destroyed as an individual when the Master stole his body after losing the Keepership. Kassia's supposed goal of saving Tremas and her own goal of power both came to nothing within the evil machinations of the Master.

Luvic

The character of Luvic was interesting, the youngest man who was a Consul of Traken. Luvic ultimately was present to become the next Keeper of Traken after the Master, as Melkur was defeated. In the right place, at the right time.

Luvic always seemed to be in the company of Katura, an older, mother-like figure. If Luvic were Tremas's male gay lover, Luvic, now a Consul, was hiding from Tremas with a woman, Katura, with whom Luvic felt safe.

Luvic said, when considered for the next Keeper nomination, as he does not have greatness in him...I wonder if that is because Luvic got his position by sexual favours and sex with Tremas. Later, when Tremas's fate after imprisonment was discussed, Luvic spoke well of Tremas.

> LUVIC: Oh, I do not have such greatness in me.
>
> LUVIC: Yes, his (Tremas) contribution to the state has been outstanding.

Luvic always seemed to be lifting his gown as he walked. When he ran into the Keeper's chamber, he lifted his gown and ran, in almost a feminine manner. Tremas walked around with his gown dragging along the ground, but never seemed to lift his "skirts" as it were.

Tremas

The character of Tremas was well-written, and the plot twist of the Master stealing, taking Tremas's body, was unexpected, and this showed the Master's cruel, diabolical, and evil nature. The contrast of the Master—vicious, ruthless, and then of Tremas, kind and gentle—was a stark difference. The Master had destroyed civilisations, killed many, but the stealing of Tremas's body was a personal gesture of his evil and selfishness.

The irony is that Tremas, when the Master was Keeper, was bounced, knocked around, nearly killed with the eyebeams of Melkur, and boydcontrolled by the Master...if the Master had let Tremas shoot himself with the weapon, Tremas's body would not have become the Master's new form.

I always felt sorry for the character of Tremas, caught in the machinations of the Master's scheme to become Keeper, and using his power-hungry wife, Kassia.

When the plan failed, the Master was desperate for a new body, and Tremas was in the wrong place at the wrong time.

The one quality of being a scientist, observation and curiosity, is what led Tremas to investigate the long case clock that was the Master's TARDIS, which led to Tremas's entrapment. Tremas had lost everything: colleagues, Consuls, the Keepership, his wife, and then his life—or much worse, his free will, and his body.

Later, Tremas would know of the Master using his form on Logopolis and the destruction of Traken. So the Doctor stated that

Tremas, Nyssa's father, was released as the truth of Tremas alive, but a prisoner in his own body controlled and used by the Master would be a fate far worse than death. Yet it is in character for the Master in the Doctor Who series.

In the Keeper of Traken episode, it always seemed Tremas was in the wrong place at the wrong time. He was not present when Luvic took the Keepership, and then he was in the wrong place, touching the Master's TARDIS in the shape of the long case clock.

When I now watch a repeat of the episode Keeper of Traken, I feel sorry for Tremas, as all along his fate is to be the Master's new body. And then in the following episodes, the things that happen to Tremas's body with the Master's depredations.

Also, if Tremas were alive but a prisoner in the Master's mind, Tremas would have to watch what the Master did—destroy, murder, and suffer, and see how the Master abused his body.

Tremas is Alive

I always thought that the Master would not have overwritten Tremas's mind and killed him.

The reasons for Tremas being alive are simple:

- Reason # 1: Evil - The Doctor called Master the "quintessence" of evil, so Master enjoys Tremas as his prisoner.

- Reason # 2: Hostage - Master has begged Doctor before for his life, but having Tremas gives him a hostage as protection and coercion to force the Doctor to help.

- Reason # 3: Body - Master does not know issues with Tremas's body, health, and allergies, but Tremas does know. Tremas has no useful knowledge, just his time-worn body of an old man, and the knowledge of its idiosyncrasies and weaknesses.

- Reason # 4: Deflector - Master let's Tremas experience the pain and agony he suffers in the Master's schemes, thus the "grounding" rod for any physical suffering in Tremas's body.

The Master, after stealing Tremas's body, never used his mind control, telepathy, or hypnosis as his previous incarnations had.

The reason is that the Master kept Tremas alive, suppressed in his mind/body, and thus unable to use his hypnosis/mind control, as he is blocking Tremas.

Also, the few times when the Master and the Doctor tried to outwit or out-think, the Doctor won...and I always wondered if Tremas was helping the Doctor from within, fighting the Master.

Tremas is Homosexual

The character of Tremas as homosexual or gay is in that his daughter, Nyssa, his daughter, was his best friend, and after the first wife died, he remarried a cold, heartless, power-hungry bitch, Kassia.

The constant "my Kassia" excessive references of affection seem either "the lady doth protest too much" or weak sarcasm. As for Luvic being Tremas's homosexual lover, Luvic seems to spend time with Katura, the older mother, and constantly says how he had no greatness in him, almost as if Luvic is admitting he is a Consul by giving Tremas sexual favours.

And as others said, the duality of Tremas walking around in a long flowing gown that seemed like a long, heavy feminine garment, in contrast to all the facial hair, but then having long hair in a feminine, combed-over-the-head style.

Tremas was like a "bearded woman" with long hair, a long flowing gown that was like some elaborate dress, yet the masculine facial hair of his beard, moustache, and sideburns.

Tremas's Body Snatch

When the Master emerges from his TARDIS at the end, after Tremas is paralysed against it, the entire scene is very homoerotic. The Master simply states, "A new body at last..." walks by Tremas, and then comes up behind him, sliding into Tremas's form.

The entire scene is homoerotic in that the Master mounts Tremas to join with his body. Tremas is literally fucked in terms of gay sex; the Master tops him, then slides into him as the bottom permanently. Tremas is also fucked proverbially, as his life and his body are now the Master's after the Master steals his form.

The scene is very homoerotic in that Tremas is leaning against the Master's TARDIS, waiting, and the Master comes out to look at his new body and snatch it as he admires Tremas's form. Tremas's eyes follow the Master, and then Tremas looks to the side as the Master walks past and comes up behind him; Tremas's eyebrow quirks as if to say, "Eh?"

The Master, unlike the Doctor, does not gloat, pat, caress, or inspect Tremas. I find it funny that the Master is "checking out" the Doctor's body, even lifting the Doctor's brown curly hair while saying how he will have full mobility. With Tremas, the Master simply looks at him after closing the TARDIS door, quoting, "A new body...at last..." as he walks by Tremas and then comes up behind him to steal Tremas's body.

I always thought the Master would have done some small thing to indicate to Tremas that Tremas was the Master's new body, such

as adjusting the long lock of hair on Tremas's face or even just putting a finger into Tremas's beard, touching and inspecting it. Or the Master might take a finger and rub it along Tremas's sideburns. Or for the Master to even look at Tremas, smile at him, and then walk past Tremas without any interest in his body.

All are gestures of casual inspection as the Master prepares to take his prize. Poor Tremas is unable to do anything except wait and watch as the Master takes his body, snatches Tremas's form for his own, and then returns to the Master's TARDIS.

If the Master had ripped Tremas's long, flowing gown off, thrown it onto the floor, and then left, Nyssa would have realised Tremas's fate; her father's long, flowing gown torn and tossed aside would indicate that Tremas had suffered some calamity. Her father's gown discarded on the floor would have been a sign of Tremas's fate and demise.

A more realistic body snatch is after the Master mounts, slides into, and fucks Tremas, for the new Master to stand in Tremas's gown, with his rotted Master robe over it, retaining all of Tremas's facial hair, only jet black. The Master could then make any changes in grooming.

Or, more simply, the Master could have ripped off Tremas's gown and clothing, shed his own rotted robe, and then mounted, slid into, and taken Tremas's body. Then the Master could have simply put everything into the oversized gown, tied it up as an improvised bag or sack, and left—of course, with nudity in the Doctor Who episode.

Although it could have been done by showing full naked bodies, nothing would have been revealed. That would have been more realistic, although even more homoerotic.

More simply, the Master could have come up from behind and mounted, slid into Tremas. Then once the transformation is complete, Tremas now stands as the Master, all his facial and head hair gloss black, standing in Tremas's long flowing gown, but also with his former rotted, dessicated robe, with the cowl over his head.

But the scene is homoerotic; the Master dominates Tremas, and while body-snatching, it also showcases a very gay anal sex dynamic, with the Master as the top mounting Tremas as the bottom for the ultimate act between two men.

Tremas's Body Contents

Some friends who read some of the novella chapters thought the fact that the Master would keep Tremas's bodily waste, his faeces and urine was...disgusting. But Tremas could have been "full" with the waste and the food and drink in his stomach.

Yet, I thought the Master would keep everything, and what if Tremas had a full stomach and was on his way to the loo to take care of his body's needs? Then the Master stole Tremas's body, taking the exterior clothing and the interior's blood, bile, faeces, urine, and stomach contents.

While the Master continued his schemes and depredations, Tremas's waste was bouncing and sloshing around inside of him, the Master enjoying the sensation while preserving Tremas's body as he had stolen it. Keeping the Master's "consolation prize" of Tremas and his body as-is when the Master snatched Tremas's body.

The Master, after existing in a rotting, decaying body, would enjoy the sensation of being full in his stomach, bowels, and bladder, just as he would keep all of Tremas's external items: his gown, shoes, ring, and loincloth.

The Trakenite society seemed technologically advanced, yet it adopted an archaic medieval style, so Tremas, wearing a loincloth under his gown, seemed natural. When Tremas wore a long, flowing gown. He could have gone rogue by wearing no underwear beneath his clothing.

The Master would set up a secret shrine to the "new body" and to Tremas. He continued to use Tremas's form even as the Doctor underwent several regenerations. I wondered how the Master stayed rejuvenated, as the body of an old man would be useless after some time, and the Master could then hide in a new body.

During the process, the poor unfortunate Tremas has to watch and experience the Master using his body, including rejuvenating his form.

Watching his body as the Master used it, and feeling the weight of faeces, urine in his bowels and bladder, Tremas would experience everything the Master did, and be driven out of his mind seeing his body used, abused, mangled, and rejuvenated.

Master Wanted the Doctor's Body

When the Master was about to slide into the Doctor's body and take his form, he was interrupted by the Source overload, the backwash of power. The Master's gloating and long villainous riff of how he would continue his existence cost the Master the Doctor's form.

So the Doctor escaped, but the Master's ultimate long-term scheme was to have the Doctor's body. Tremas was simply a temporary means to continue the Master's plans and to ultimately acquire the Doctor's body as a final, new form with regenerations.

The Master never demanded or accepted the new set of regenerations he was offered, and I wondered why; but if the Master did not need them as he had his system of rejuvenating Tremas's body, then his ultimate goal must have been to obtain the Doctor's body.

Curse of Tremas

After stealing Tremas's body, in every following Doctor Who episode, something always seemed to happen to the Master's "new" body or had happened to it.

My favourite moment is when the Brigadier delivers a knockout punch, and then the Master is tied up in old tapestries. Another is when he is buried and trapped under his own TARDIS, or when the Doctor immolates the Master in the Nusamaton gas.

There was the time the Master was hit in the head with a rock from a Cyberman's blast and was knocked out cold, face down. I always wondered why the Doctor or one of his companions simply did not do something physical to the Master, stopping his evil, diabolical schemes, or simply destroying him. The Doctor could have taken a rock and bludgeoned the Master face down, unconscious, and then departed.

After the Brigadier knocked the Master out with a punch to his face, and the Master was tied up on the floor, helpless, the Doctor or any one of the Doctors, or the Doctor's companions could have simply bashed in the Master's skull. Or stepped on the back of the Master's neck, killing him, and destroying the Doctor's greatest enemy.

Each time the Master suffers, I always wondered if Tremas was alive in his body; then Tremas would see and experience the agony, pain, and suffering. Tremas would see his body abused, damaged by the Master's machinations.

However, the Master's "new" body seemed to always be doomed to some form of abuse or damage, yet the Master would reappear in another episode fresh and healed. Additionally, considering Tremas was just an old man, not some muscular, strapping athlete, or even a young man (like Luvic on Traken), the abuse, damage, and suffering of his body seem like a curse.

Batman 1966

The Master, using Tremas's body with no damage, is akin to the superhero television programs of the 1960s or 1970s, such as Adam West as Batman in the 1966 Batman and Robin television program, as a middle-aged man running around in spandex tights and satin garments in the millionaire body of Bruce Wayne.

Adam West as Batman would get trapped, punched, and tied up, put into deadly traps, with his body would get hurt. Later, in regular clothes, there was no physical damage to Bruce Wayne.

No black eye, bruises, scratches, cuts, broken teeth, or any damage to his face or body. So, somehow magically, Adam West as Batman took no damage in the fights with the villains and their minions. The Master had that same "freshness" when he was encountered in the next Doctor Who episode.

The Master became the villain with the new body of another man, suffering through hard times as the Master's schemes were foiled by the Doctor. And like Adam West as Batman, the Master's "new" body never showed any damage from the Master's mistakes that caused him physical damage.

Stargate SG-1 Host

Alternatively, it's like the television series Stargate SG-1, where a host is controlled by the parasitic Goa'uld in the host's body, and the host suffers as the Goa'uld does in their body.

Yet, the Master did not move to another body at any point, while the Doctor regenerated several times. This paradox of staying healthy while enduring the curse of suffering in the stolen body of an old man was part of the story's motivation.

Novella Plot and Motivation

The novella revolves around Tremas's and the Master's destiny, connecting different elements of episodes from the Doctor Who genre to create the story.

Other fan fiction pieces either mentioned Tremas or speculated on whether the Master had taken a female body, such as Nyssa's. I did not find any fanfiction regarding Tremas's and the Master's ultimate fate.

A Doctor Who episode where Tremas is freed, and the Master trapped, but with a cliffhanger, was missing, and overlooked aspect of the Master stealing and using Tremas's body. The Doctor Who series ended, with the Master still using Tremas's body, without any resolution to Tremas's fate or his body.

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Wishing you a year filled with laughter, love, and new adventures! Cheers! It's your round!

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